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PART XXV.

BIBLE-BURNING AND BIBLE-READING.

A BOOK of no small size, and brimful of matter, might be written on the "shamelessness of Protestantism." We do not mean its moral immodesty, its impertinences, its impudent and ungentlemanly treatment of all things Catholic; but its logical shamelessness. It is natural, indeed, that it should be shameless in general, and especially shameless in the matter of logical consistency. Impostors and self-deceivers are in general flagrantly guilty of those very vices from which they most loudly profess themselves to be free, and their worst sins are in violation of those virtues of which they make their especial boast.

Accordingly, as we hold Protestantism to be an imposition, and all Protestants to be either deceivers or deceived, we look for a peculiarly striking exhibition of vice in that very subject in which Protestantism boasts that it is peculiarly eminent for excellence as compared with the "Church of Rome." *Reason*, and its free and right use, is the glory of the Protestant of all shapes and denominations. We are dull, stupid, ignorant, superstitious; the slaves of traditions and of a crafty priesthood. We don't like the light; we hate science; we are averse to thought and reasoning, and every thing else that may make people inquire into the claims of our Church, because we know that those claims will not stand inquiry. Protestantism, on the contrary, may have its defects; but, at any rate, it is a free, open, bold, honourable creed, which fears not discussion, loves truth above all things, and takes its stand by the side of Euclid's *Elements* and Newton's *Principia*.

Now, as we Papists happen to be able to see into the real comparative merits of these claims, we no sooner hear a Protestant boast of his reason and his logic than we prepare ourselves for some extraordinary display of silliness, shallowness,

and inconsistency. We are like men and boys; of whom it has been said, that whereas boys *think* men to be fools, men *know* boys to be such. Such are we and our "separated brethren." They think that we are afraid of reasoning; we know that they are afraid of it. They are of opinion that we are inconsistent; we see that they are so. We give complete and consistent explanations of our doctrines and practices; but they will not hear us; and when we call upon them to explain and systematise *their* views and customs, they turn round and give us personal insult instead of rational answers. Our religion, in fact, being a science, and theirs a quackery, they feel as uncomfortable when they are questioned, as a travelling dealer in nostrums when catechised by a skilful and educated practitioner in the healing art. With all our respect, in fact, for the good intentions and personal worth of many Protestants, we must confess that the practice of their teachers not a little reminds us of the oratory of the vendors of marvellous pills, miraculous powders, and plasters professing to be able to set a compound fracture of all the bones in the body, who may be seen gulling their dupes at every country fair. Every man has his pill, his powder, and his plaster, whose virtues are attested by innumerable dukes, baronets, and bishops, and which will relieve the stomachs, heal the wounds, and prolong the lives of every body who has any thing in the world the matter with him, without going to those old rogues, the professional doctors, and paying them their exorbitant fees.

A very notable specimen of the logical consistency of our Protestant friends has recently been making a considerable noise in the world. Put briefly, the Protestant reasoning runs thus: The Bible condemns Popery; therefore Papists hate the Bible; therefore they burn the Bible; therefore we will burn them. This last conclusion, indeed, they do not put forth in such plain English; but they do all they possibly can, nevertheless, to torment and persecute us. Their custom, on the contrary, is to shout aloud that all religious persecution is wicked and detestable. This makes the diversion doubly pleasant. They have the gratification of believing themselves the most tolerant and charitable of men, and at the same time of victimising the Papists. It is much the same as if the Cromwellians had beheaded Charles the First to the tune of "God save the King." Protestants contrive completely to disprove the old proverb, which says, that you cannot both eat your cake and have it. This is quite a mistake so far as Catholics are concerned. It is the easiest thing in the world to hang a Papist on the first principles of toleration. Trust an Irish Orangeman, or a British prime-minister,

for finding the most Christian of excuses for perpetrating the most wicked of enormities. "The Bible forbids persecution; the Papists burn the Bible; *therefore* punish the Papists." This is your true Anglo-Hibernian syllogism. All that is necessary in order to make the argument faultless, is to change the word "persecute" for the word "punish." Never mind the identity of the two things. All that is wanted is a popular "cry,"—a good, telling, striking tune for the fifes and trumpets of the anti-Catholic band; "God save the King," in fact, to be played while the monarch's head is chopped off.

Let us inquire a little, however, if we can find a stray hearer, into the principle involved in this Bible-burning affair. In the first place, then, we beg our readers, both Catholic and Protestant, to bear in mind that we ourselves give no opinion whatsoever as to the expediency of publicly burning Protestant Bibles, or any sort of bad books, in any part of Ireland or elsewhere. For any thing we have to say, it may have been the most undesirable, or it may have been the most prudent thing in the world for the Redemptorist Fathers to have desired their penitents to burn their immoral books in the streets at Kingstown. The same as to the Protestant Bibles, which were said to have shared the fate of the immolated immoral publications, but which certainly were not burnt by the desire of the Redemptorist Superior;—it might have been wise to burn them, or it might have been unwise to do it,—of all this we say nothing whatever. But we do maintain, that if it was prudent to cast them into the flames, the fathers had abstractedly a perfect right to instruct their penitents to do it. They would have offered no insult whatsoever to the Word of God by such an injunction; and they would have done what Protestants are incessantly doing themselves in precisely similar circumstances. And, moreover, they have an example set them in the sacred Scriptures themselves, which might well have led them to regard such a public burning as desirable in Ireland. If, then, they ever act unwisely, by all means let those who are distressed or scandalised by their doings remonstrate in the proper way and through the proper quarters. If it be only on the ground of keeping the peace, the Irish prelates would be the last persons in the world to refuse to listen to the wishes of the secular power, or of any private person whatsoever, who treated the question rationally, and on its own proper grounds. Protestants are entirely mistaken if they imagine that we Catholics wish to hurt them; that we do not honour them for honouring what they consider to be the Word of God; or that we would needlessly do any thing which would shock their better feelings in this or any other

matter. Only, we say, let them approach the subject rationally and fairly ; let them attempt, at least, to enter into our views, as we are willing to enter into theirs, and to abstain from instigating those very acts of which they so loudly complain.

Take, for instance, this Bible-burning. The Protestant party themselves began a course of action which made the possession of one of King James's Bibles the symbol of unfaithfulness in a Catholic. A knot of silly fanatics in London, Dublin, and elsewhere, got up a scheme for Protestantising the Irish poor, which they have been prosecuting with considerable zeal, a large expenditure of money, soup, flannel, and all the other means for "conversion," accompanied by a proportionate distribution of the Anglican translation of the Bible. These precious proceedings have produced a very considerable amount of irritation among many of the Irish Catholics, of a totally different kind from that which would be produced by the efforts of a better class of Protestants anxious for what they think the good of the Irish poor. As for supposing that the Irish poor are really Protestantised by *reading* King James's Bible, it is out of the question altogether. It is a bad version enough, and to call it *the* Word of God is simply absurd ; but the real study of the Protestant Bible never yet made a man a Protestant. It is the preachments and annotations of living seducers which corrupt the unwary and ignorant, and make them fancy that the Holy Ghost speaks the language of Martin Luther. Nevertheless, the possession of one of these versions is practically, with many of the Irish poor, a sign that they have in some way or other yielded to the tempter's snare. Like the visits of an habitual drunkard to a tavern, the mere material act becomes a handle for the enemy to work upon. There is no more necessary harm in being in the tap of a public-house than in walking in a green field ; but when a man who is given to drunkenness walks into a gin-shop, it is morally certain that he will fall into sin. So, too, it may be certain that the poor Irish Catholic will never deliberately read one page out of these sham Bibles, and that if he does, he will see no more Protestantism in them than the Pope sees in the Vulgate ; but it is at the same time a fact, that in his conscience he feels that he is tampering with sin ; he is wearing the livery of the enemy of souls ; he is consenting to parley when he has no safety but in flight ; and therefore *to him* the mere possession of one of these printed books is a sin of deep dye, and he must consent to give it up before his confessor can lawfully give him absolution.

When, then, Lord Palmerston's government, or any private Protestant, attacks the Redemptorists, or any other Catholic priests, for making their penitents give up or destroy their Anglican Bibles, in all consistency let them first silence Lord Shaftesbury and the rest of those who thrust them into the hands of the Irish poor. Who, we say, is answerable for the scandal, if there is any? not the Redemptorists, but these Exeter-Hall peers, colonels, and old ladies. If Lord Palmerston had the smallest idea of fairness and consistency—to suppose an almost impossibility—why does he not give a significant hint to these firebrands, through their prime supporter, who is his own near connection? Lord Shaftesbury is as conceited a personage as is easily to be met with, and is about as ignorant of the Bible and of the Catholic religion as any man in the three kingdoms; but we suspect he is perfectly capable of taking such a hint from Lord Palmerston as Lord Palmerston is perfectly capable of giving. Lord Palmerston, however, thinks it will be a popular move to bully a Popish priest; and accordingly, while laughing in his sleeve at every body concerned, he puts on a solemn face, and sanctions the gross hypocrisy. As for those lawyers, who call themselves Catholics, and yet have the baseness to lend themselves as the tools of the enemies of their religion, they may rest assured that while they pocket the wages of their iniquity they are heartily despised by the men who use them to do their dirty work. It comes within the limits of possibility that some sort of “invincible ignorance” may be an excuse for the Shaftesbury clique; but what shall be said of those self-styled Catholics who turn round upon the priests of Almighty God for the sake of the salary of a ministerial appointment?

The Protestant Bible, then, undoubtedly comes under the category of bad books, in a peculiarly emphatic sense of the word, in the case of the Irish poor; and the fault that it is so lies entirely at the door of those English and Irish Protestants who have used it as the symbol of perversion from the Catholic faith. Being, therefore, a bad book, can it be wondered that many persons should think that it furnished a legitimate reason for following the example recorded in Holy Scripture itself in similar circumstances? We repeat, that we are not at all deciding the question as to whether it *was* desirable to burn publicly any bad books in Kingstown on the occasion in question; but we do say that, with the Bible itself furnishing an example of a similar burning, a great deal was certainly to be said in favour of what was done, whether the arguments on the other side were more weighty or no. In the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, then,—we beg

to remind those of our Protestant friends who happen to know any thing of the Bible, and to inform those who know nothing of it,—it is recorded that, under the direction of St. Paul himself, the Christian converts at Ephesus publicly burnt their bad books; and this public burning is one of the circumstances on which the inspired writer founds his remark, that the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed. Now, supposing that among the bad books of the Ephesian converts had been found sundry copies of mutilated or incorrect versions of the Old Testament, which had been employed by the false apostles of the day as instruments for opposing St. Paul and the other true ambassadors from Christ, does any man suppose that these Judaised editions of the Sacred Scriptures would have escaped the flames?—not for a moment. They would have gone first into the fire, and not one of them been spared.

The religious Protestant, no doubt, is shocked at such a comparison of his Bible with the Pharisaical and Sadducean misinterpretation of the Word of God. But let him pause a moment, and endeavour, on the principles of private judgment, to place himself in our position. If he accounts us irreverent, profane, and reckless of wounding his feelings, because we say that, abstractedly speaking, the book he so much cherishes is only fit for the flames, let him remember what he would do with books which he regards, as we regard King James's translation, and which for brevity's sake we have called the Protestant Bible, though it is, in fact, no Bible at all. How many well-disposed Protestants are there who would not throw into the fire every Catholic book they caught in the hands of their own children? Paterfamilias has a daughter, whom he shrewdly suspects of a leaning towards Popery. She solemnly assures him this is quite a mistake. She was born a Protestant, she will live a Protestant, and a Protestant she will die. She loves the Church of England; she is perfectly satisfied with its "scriptural" liturgy; and she has a perfect horror of Roman corruptions. Nevertheless, Paterfamilias discovers that this ingenuous young lady has got a *Garden of the Soul*, and an *English Missal*, and St. Alphonsus Liguori's *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*, which books she is continually reading. Will Paterfamilias believe his daughter's protestations of unblemished Protestantism, so long as she insists on keeping these Popish publications as her own? We trow not. Will he not rather take them from her, and immolate them in the drawing-room fire-place before her eyes? Why, then, should not we burn King James's version?

We have said that it is only as a matter of convenience that we have all along spoken of this version as "the Protestant Bible." This sounds strange, we admit, to the ears of thousands of good Protestants, who have hitherto regarded the book as the Word of God. In all their religious doubts and difficulties, it has never occurred to them that, after all, they have *neither* Church nor Bible to teach them the will of God. Anxious as they may have felt as to the correctness of their personal interpretations of the Old and New Testaments, they have never questioned the fact that the Bible was actually before their eyes, if only they could understand it aright. It has ever been their consolation to regard these printed volumes as something quite different from any thing else in the world; as holy and to be revered; because in them the Almighty God is actually speaking to His creatures, if only they could open their minds thoroughly to comprehend what He says.

But what is the fact? King James's version—the authorised version, as it is termed—is *not* the Bible. We let the question of what Protestants call the Apocrypha pass over, as we are addressing them on their own ground. Supposing that the only inspired Scriptures are those of which the Protestant Bible gives a translation, is this translation to be depended on as the Word of God, faithfully rendered into English? If it is not, the Protestant is indeed trusting to a broken reed. And that it is not a faithful rendering is beyond all possibility of doubt. We set aside Catholic criticisms; we take only the admissions of the stoutest Protestants, and the most devoted adherents of the Anglican Establishment; and on their repeated assertions we say that it is a monstrous fiction to call the volume in question *the Bible*. *There is not one single Protestant critic of any pretensions to learning who does not bear us out in saying this.* Disagreeing in every thing else, they speak as one man in condemning this version as abounding in errors, often of the most serious kind. The ablest critics of all declare that these errors are innumerable. These errors are, moreover, many of them palpably the result of dishonesty in the translators. They perverted the Word of God, in order to make it speak Calvinism. If any man doubt it, let him go to Lambeth, and ask Dr. Sumner, the Archbishop of Canterbury, for his opinion, as deliberately stated many years ago in print. We have not said one word which he has not said before us. And has Protestantism a better representative than Dr. Sumner? Is *he* likely to turn Papist or Dissenter? Or read any of the more recent works of Biblical critics, such as those by Mr. Stanley, the canon of Canterbury; or Mr.

Jowett, the Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford. But suppose we take a testimony far removed from these times of movement and controversy. None can be more unexceptionable than Bishop Lowth; one of the very few men of whom the Anglican body can really boast as scholars, whose works deserve a place in the theologian's library. Lowth's work on the prophet Isaias is confessedly a master-piece, both as to learning and to critical ability; while as a specimen of pure, nervous, and poetic English, his translation is really magnificent. What, then, says Bishop Lowth of this translation, which so many millions revere as the Word of God? In his preliminary dissertation to his translation of Isaias, he condemns the Old Testament portion as being nothing better than "the translation of a translation." It is, in fact, a slavish following of the interpretation put upon all difficult and obscure passages by the Jewish Masoretic punctuators; and it is based, says Lowth, "on an ill-founded opinion of the authority of the Jews, both as interpreters and conservators" of the Scriptures. He admits the beauty of the English of the Protestant version, so far as mere language goes; but as to sense and accuracy, he considers that the changes needed are "great and numberless."

In fact, no Catholic critic could go further than do all accomplished Protestant critics in their condemnation of this book, which the English nation is in the habit of receiving as the Word of God. From Archbishops of Canterbury downwards, there is one universal *consensus* in the sentence which deposes it from its claims. To attack us, therefore, when we protest against its being placed in the hands of our unlearned poor, and made the symbol of their reception of the pure Gospel, as distinguished from the invention of man, is one of the most audacious instances of logical shamelessness that even theological controversy can supply. If the sincere Protestant public is contented to pin its faith upon a book universally condemned as abounding in error, that is a matter for their decision. If they are contented to begin with protesting against the Pope, and to end with believing in the Gospel according to King James, it is for them to prepare such an explanation of this unpardonable abuse of reason as will serve them in good stead at the great day of account. But in the mean time, let them not add hypocrisy to inconsistency, and heap insults on us, because we refuse reverence to that volume which their own verdict has already condemned.

In saying this, let us not be misunderstood as asserting what it is far from our minds to mean. "Great and innumerable"—as Bishop Lowth calls them—as are the errors in

the Protestant Bible, we should deeply grieve to see *Protestants* cease to read it, and take up with the theological writings of any of their numberless sects as their exclusive source of instruction. If they cannot get at the real Bible in its purity, let them at least study the nearest approach to it which is within their reach. Incorrect as is the authorised version, it is not for an instant to be placed on the same level with the writings and sermons of living or dead Protestants of any class or denomination whatsoever. The misery of Protestants is, that making their boast of the Bible, they will not read it for themselves, but take up with some or other of these boundless interpretations of fallible men. We do not say that they do not go through many parts of it with their eyes and lips, and that some portions of it do not fasten themselves on their memory; but we declare that a real Bible-reading Protestant is one of the rarest beings upon earth. They talk about their personal and independent judgment in reading the Scriptures; but they never *use* it earnestly and fairly. Either they are proud, insolent, and worldly-minded, and so are blinded by their own sins; or they come to the Bible with a ready-made interpretation beforehand, and whatever they read in it, they see nothing but what is conformable to these pre-supposed theories. The Protestant talk about Bible-reading is one of the most transparent of fictions. Their minds are deluged with floods of human traditions, of one sort or another, which take possession of their understanding, and darken it so that the Word of God is utterly without sense or meaning to them. Sunk in slavery to the inventions of man, they satisfy their consciences by just going through the words of what they imagine to be the Sacred Scriptures; and are firmly convinced that if they have plenty of texts upon their tongues, they have the Word of God in their understandings and in their hearts.

An instructive illustration of the true worth of the Protestant professions about the Bible is to be found in the interminable commentaries which they append to the text. "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible;" this is the motto of Protestantism. Its practice is directly the reverse. Protestant religious literature swarms with elaborate interpretations of the Scriptures. The Bible "without note or comment" is a thing without existence, speaking practically. Doubtless there are millions and millions of printed copies of the Bible (King James's version); and most Protestants possess one or more of them. But when it comes to reading them, instantly they fly to their favourite commentator, to affix the proper meaning to each doctrinal passage,

and to apply each moral precept. The sale of these innumerable commentaries is amazing. One man has Scott, another Henry, another Doddridge, another Mant and Doyly, another Girdlestone, another Townsend, another Simeon, another Stanley, another Shuttleworth, another some one of those various modern Dissenting productions, which we have from time to time seen, but whose names we cannot call to mind. What a melancholy sight it is! To see a strong, earnest, and, in many respects, a generous and noble-minded people, thus given up to one of the shallowest of delusions that ever illustrated the weakness of poor human nature! To see a man believing in Scott and Simeon, when he might hear St. Paul! To behold an earnest congregation putting faith in a flippant Evangelical or starched "Anglo-Catholic" preacher, when the very words of the Eternal Son of God are before him!

Contrast the Catholic practice. We do not say that the possession and personal study of the Scriptures is the necessary way for every man to learn how to be saved; consequently we do not force Bibles on poor and rich, old and young, people with vast abilities and much learning, and people who cannot even read. But we do say that the Bible is the Word of God, and that its constant and earnest study is a most profitable means for advancing in the knowledge and love of God. Accordingly, we have abundance of Bibles in the vernacular, not professing to be infallibly correct, and which no one thinks of venerating as in every detail *the* Word of God; yet sufficiently correct for practical purposes, though by no means perfect. These Catholic Bibles, moreover, stand in most marked contrast with the Protestant editions. The Protestant, to save his consistency in appearance, has one Bible without note or comment; but he has his commentary or commentaries also, of portentous dimensions, swamping the sacred text with a torrent of Lutheran, or Calvinistic, or Anglican phraseology. Our Bibles, on the other hand, certainly have a few very brief explanatory notes on a few of the more difficult passages; but immeasurably the greater portion of the sacred text stands uninterpreted, and left entirely to the devout intelligence of the reader.

So, too, in respect to the phrase "the whole Bible." Every honest Protestant, who is well informed, admits to himself that there are sundry parts of the Bible which make him feel extremely uncomfortable, and which he would be glad to see cut out, by some lawful expedient, from the sacred text. There are texts, and almost whole books, which look so extremely like a condemnation of his particular views, or

are so disagreeably Popish-looking, that he never by choice reads them; and he is sorry to think that they exist. He does not go the length of Luther, in words at least, and call St. James's Epistle an epistle of straw, or abuse the Epistle to the Hebrews in the language of Billingsgate. But he certainly is puzzled to make out how inspired writers could seem to contradict each other so surprisingly; and he thinks that, after all, some of the writers of the scriptural books knew more of the matter than the rest.

These sort of feelings never rise in the breast of a Catholic. It never occurs to him to be afraid of any part of the Word of God. Of course he sees obscure passages, and some in the interpretation of which learned and pious men will probably differ till the end of the world. But that is a very different thing from feeling that certain parts of Scripture really tell against one's own interpretation of the rest. Luther hated St. James, and insulted St. Paul by trying to set him up as a safer guide than his brother Apostles. But we never dream of setting up St. James against St. Paul. The bare notion is absurd. We do not see the opposition of one part of the Bible to another part. And as to setting up one of the Apostles as inspired, in disparagement of others, we should look on such a proceeding as a direct and unpardonable insult to Almighty God Himself. The works of the Saints and the best spiritual writers abound with advice to the devout to study the Scriptures; and it is not a little instructive to compare their manner of doing so with the common practice of anti-Catholic religious teachers. Protestant parents and preachers continually advise the use of such and such a commentary on the Bible as its companion. When a Catholic Saint or master of spiritual life says any thing about the best way of reading the Scriptures, it is to advise the perpetual contemplation of Christ crucified as the central light which lightens every thing that moves around it, ourselves kneeling before a crucifix, so that the very posture of the body and the material object which strikes the eyes, may remind us that we are nothing, and Jesus Christ is all in all. This is the true Catholic commentary on the Bible; and it will continue to be practised by us as long as the world shall last, and when all the sects which now unite only to assail us have passed away, and given place to some newer and more terrible manifestation of that lying spirit which hates Christ, and at once employs and perverts His sacred Word.

ST. OSWALD'S;
 OR,
 LIFE IN THE CLOISTER.

CHAPTER VII.

A NOVICE'S DIFFICULTIES. FATHER BASIL'S HISTORY.

THE bell was ringing for matins at St. Oswald's, and had just woke Brother Clement (the elder Longford) from a heavy slumber into which he had fallen, after a night of broken and uneasy sleep. His head still throbbed; and as he passed his hand over his forehead and pressed it upon his eyes in order to wake himself thoroughly and without delay, he looked round upon the walls and furniture of his cell. Unconsciously, the image of his former comfortable sleeping-room at Woodlands mingled with his observation of the poor and rather old furniture which scantily served for the necessities of life in his new abode. He felt cold at the prospect. The bare walls, with their almost colourless surface broken only by a small plain crucifix and two or three religious prints; the floor, with not even a fragment of old carpet a few feet square in the middle; a deal table; a couple of book-shelves, with a very few books upon them; a washing-stand in keeping with the rest; and a hard pallet bedstead, with a mattress such as he would not have thought of putting a dog to sleep upon in former times,—all this contrasted with the luxuriously fitted-up apartment which it had been his mother's delight to watch over for his especial use in comfortable Woodlands. Involuntarily he said to himself, "And this is for life!" and a faint sensation of creeping spread itself over his frame.

He had gone to bed the night before with a racking headache, feeling acutely the trial of solitariness and the absence of the gentle tenderness of a mother's care, always delightful, but doubly so when weariness and illness bring down the heart of a man to a sense of feebleness and dependence. For hours the difficulties of his new life, which he had now entered on for some little time, had been presenting themselves to his imagination with all the exaggeration which the night-time and solitude can produce; especially, as in his case, when restless sleep comes and goes every few minutes.

“And this is for life!” said the young novice to himself. “Shall I ever bear it? Am I really called to it? Am I fit for it? Have I health and strength to stand up against solitude, and cold, and hard fare, and the absence of all the small enjoyments of which I thought so little when I had them daily in abundance, but which I now miss, I think, more and more every day? Is this *my* cross, after all?”

And as he went on rapidly dressing, doubts, difficulties, and questionings coursed one upon another through his mind. All the immense responsibility involved in choosing a life for oneself pressed upon him with formidable force. He wondered whether he was really a person fit thus to go out of the ordinary track of Christians; to break through the habits, associations, and feelings of his past life, and bind himself by an irrevocable vow to a state of existence which was so unpalatable to human nature,—at least to his human nature.

“Surely one must not *choose* one’s cross,” he said to himself. “It is the very secret of the spiritual life to accept our cross, just as God gives it. And am I not now making my choice of one cross instead of another; running away from the trials and temptations of that life which I so much dread, and flying to the cloister in order to shirk the hard work that God’s providence has cut out for me elsewhere?”

Then, before he could well weigh the questions he was putting to himself, a whole cloud of pictures presented themselves to his imagination; all the calm sweets of domestic life; the useful and honourable career of a religious man living on his property and a benefactor to all about him; the pleasures of society, amusements, books; even a host of lower enjoyments still,—good dinners, a luxurious bed in place of the board-like mattress from which he had risen, fine horses, and a run with the hounds, even to the poor gratification of being well dressed and waited upon;—all these points of contrast between the life he was leaving and the life he was embracing swept across his brain with dazzling brightness. For a moment he seemed to himself to waver even in the noblest part of his nature, and to be on the point of saying to himself, “It won’t do; I can’t stand it; it’s impossible.”

In action, however, there was no sign of faltering. His *will*, though he did not know it himself, did not falter for an instant. It was not even shaken. The imagination alone, and the lower part of his nature, were disturbed. It did not for the briefest space of time occur to him practically to hesitate. He finished his dressing and was in his place in choir, wearing his usual grave, earnest, and steadfast expression. The remnants

of the pictures that had haunted his fancy still flitted about his thoughts during the progress of the Divine Office; and he was sensible of a more than ordinary bracing up of his spirit for a work of immense difficulty; but never since his clothing had he experienced so much real repose of mind, or had so thoroughly entered into the mystic meaning of the devotions in which he was taking his share.

"You look more serious than ever to-day," said his brother to him in the course of the afternoon. "I'm afraid the diet and early hours are telling on you rather uncomfortably. I hope you've no idea of giving in?"

"None in the world," said he, adding, as he observed the particularly vigorous and healthy look of his brother, "it seems to agree with *you*, at any rate. I protest that you look jollier every day. I never heard you talk such an astonishing quantity of nonsense before as you gave us to-day at recreation."

"Why, my dear fellow," said the younger, "nonsense is the very soul and life of recreation. If I hadn't a first-rate digestion and splendid spirits, I don't know what I should do. I really must have been born to be a monk; and you can't think how I enjoy it. How I did enjoy the singing in choir this morning! and I thought to myself, what is there in the world's amusements to compare with this? Come now, did not you enjoy it yourself? I am sure you did. I caught a glimpse of you, and thought you seemed prodigiously happy."

"If you mean, did I like the singing," replied the elder, "I can't say I did. It set my teeth on edge; Brother Chrysostom's voice always reminds me of a cracked clarionet. If St. John Chrysostom had been blest with such an organ, I fear he would never have been the 'Saint of the golden mouth,' with all his eloquence."

"Oh," cried the other, "what is there in a voice?"

"A great deal," cried Brother Clement, interrupting him with a laugh.

"What's in the voice?" continued Brother Cyril; "it's the spirit that is the thing. One doesn't pray with one's throat, but with one's heart and understanding."

"But you don't sing *without* your throat, nevertheless," replied the elder. "I grant you that it is the spirit which speaks to the spirit; but at the same time, the voice speaks to the *ear*. And I confess to you, that my ears, accustomed only to drawing-room warblings, have more than once ached pretty considerably under Brother Chrysostom's golden notes. However, when I look at his good, honest, devout face as he

sings, I feel very much ashamed of myself, and could find it in my heart to go and ask his pardon for wronging him."

"What a nuisance it must be to be as sensitive as you are!" cried Brother Cyril. "Now I dare say you are disgusted with the smells that come up from Farmer Pounce's farmyard and pigsties. They certainly are inconveniently near the monastery, and I wonder Father Prior doesn't buy out the worthy farmer."

"Do you mean to say that you *like* those Arabian perfumes, then?" asked Brother Clement.

"Not exactly that," said the other; "but I overlook them some how or other."

"That's a confusion of ideas," replied the elder brother. "You can't overlook a smell, unless you mean that your window overlooks the farmyard and pigsties from which the savoury odours proceed, as mine does in fact."

"No doubt some day they will be done away with," remarked Brother Cyril.

"When friend Pounce is done away with himself, they may be," said his brother; "for my part, I expect to have to endure these scents for a considerable portion of my natural life, if I remain here."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Brother Cyril. "I trust I shall lose my sense of smelling, then. This is a version of the 'odour of sanctity' I am not at all prepared for."

The elder brother shrugged his shoulders, smiled, and the conversation changed.

A day or two afterwards, the elder of the two brothers was engaged in one of those interviews with the novice-master which fill so influential a part in the wise carrying out of the system of the novitiate. It was not one of the formal "manifestations of conscience," made under the seal of secrecy, but rather a friendly conversation, less obligatory, but scarcely less important.

"There is a question I very much want to ask you," said Brother Clement; "but I hardly know how to put it, for fear it should seem impertinent. The subject does trouble me, however, so much, that I fancy I had better not let it go working and worrying in my mind, but out with it at once."

"By all means," said Father Benedict; "and let me beg of you, once for all, always to adopt the same plan. It is of the very first importance that you should have no concealments from me of any thing that passes in your mind; I mean, of course, of things that bear at all upon your spiritual life. A novice-master is like a doctor; he has not a fair chance if his patients conceal any of their symptoms from him."

"But suppose they seem absurdly trifling, and can't be mentioned without indulging some questionable feeling in one's own mind? What ought I to do in that case?"

"You may be assured," replied Father Benedict, "that you are not a safe judge as to what is trifling and what is important in such matters. What you think important may be trifling, and the reverse. These sort of things can only be judged of by long experience. A young novice is like an infant learning the relative size and position of material objects. Nothing but the experience of others can guide it right. Never be afraid of telling me too much. All I ask in return is, that when I decide about any thing, you should rest satisfied with my decision. In some cases, it is a most delicate affair, this ascertaining a vocation; and the grand difficulty often lies in the concealment of something that ought to be known."

"But supposing one finds it impossible to mention things without in some degree giving way to some temptation or other; what ought to be done then?"

"Rely on it," said the Father, "that in this case you are *not* indulging an improper feeling, or giving way to a temptation. These very agitations of feeling which precede or accompany the manifestation of your secret conscience to your appointed spiritual guide are often nothing but snares, which tend to keep you silent when you ought to speak. It may be very right not to talk of such things to other people; but the case is quite different when you come to a person like myself, who is called upon to advise you on so momentous a question as your vocation, and who therefore *has a right* to know the whole state of your mind."

"I see the difference now quite clearly," replied the young man; "but I don't know what you'll think of me for what I am going to say."

"That's just your mistake," said the Father. "Never mind what I shall think of you. It is nothing to you what I shall think of you, as you are just now. I want to get at the facts of your spiritual life, in order that I may put you in the right track, if you are out of it, and show you how to co-operate with the grace of God, if He is really giving you a vocation. The great thing, in every circumstance that a human being can be placed in, is to do one's plain duty; if with the purest feelings, so much the better; if with mixed feelings, then with them. At any rate, what is right in itself must be *done*. And now what are you going to ask me?"

"About Father Basil?" said Brother Clement, still hesitating.

"What about him?" asked the Father.

"About the stories that have been told of him so long. May I know the real truth?" said the novice.

"Not from me, certainly," replied Father Benedict; "for I don't know it myself. But now, as you have mentioned your wish, I must ask you why you want to know. Is it from mere curiosity, or not?"

"I don't think it is," said the novice. "I am not, I fancy, easily given to be scandalised; but I *can't* get over the ideas that the daily sight of Father Basil suggests. The thought recurs to me again and again, and seems to stand like a sentinel at the door, to warn me away from the monastic life."

"Could you put into exact shape the difficulties thus suggested?" asked the novice-master.

"Yes, Father, I think so," replied the other. "The question with me is just this: if Father Basil is guilty, why does he go on unpunished, and taking just the same part in the duties of the community as the rest of the Fathers? If he is innocent, why does he avoid every body, and why is it so plain that there is a painful distance between him and all the others?"

"Is it so very plain that there exists an obstacle to free intercourse between him and others, should you say? I ask simply because I should like to know how it strikes any one who, like yourself, has recently come into the house."

"Oh, no one could possibly help seeing it. Why, Father Basil flies away like a frightened bird when any one comes near him, unless he is actually obliged to stay."

Father Benedict sighed, and looked extremely distressed.

"And you think that is the sort of impression that would be conveyed to any chance looker-on?" he continued.

"I am sure of it. I can see as plain as the day that every body is acting a part in respect to him; trying to go on as if there was nothing the matter, and yet uncomfortable all the while. Little as I have seen of the Fathers since I came, I am as sure of it as if we novices were always with you. One almost sees it at the altar."

"God forbid!" exclaimed the novice-master; "I do trust not. Surely no distressing feelings between him and others are apparent there. You must be mistaken; at least I fervently hope so."

"It may be fancy," said the novice; "but I don't think it is."

"And you mean, if I understand you, that this subject becomes a positive temptation to you, or something like it; and opposes your belief that you have a vocation here?" continued the Father.

"That's exactly it," replied Brother Clement.

"I suppose you know the real facts, don't you?" said the Father.

"I have heard so many stories about it, that I could never guess what was the real truth," said the other. "Indeed, till I came here, I was half-disposed to think the whole thing was a pure calumny."

"Perhaps it is so," said the Father; "but as you seem to feel the thing so deeply, you had better know the exact state of the case, as far as any body knows it. About three years ago, Father Basil was accidentally in company with some persons, all but one of them strangers to him, in the coffee-room of an inn at —, which you know is about ten miles from here. He was on his way back to St. Oswald's, having been absent on some duty or other for a few weeks, and he had gone into the coffee-room to wait while a horse was being saddled for him to ride from — here. The person who was not a stranger to him was, as it was afterwards ascertained, an Italian of the name of Bertini. This man, as we have learnt by various inquiries, had once done Father Basil a most grievous wrong, while he was resident in one of our houses in Italy. I need not go into the particulars of what the thing was, but it is enough to tell you that it was one of the most terrible injuries which one man can be guilty of towards another. It appeared, also, that at the period when Bertini had thus wronged him, Father Basil, who is naturally a man of extraordinarily sensitive and vehement temperament, had been agitated by what he endured to a serious extent. He felt the injury most acutely; though his conduct on the occasion was almost, if not altogether, blameless.

"At the same time, those who have known him all his life say that a decided change took place in his character after Bertini had injured him in this way. There grew upon him what seemed like a perpetual tension of the mind, as if it was always anxiously directed to one subject. His life was irreproachable, except for an occasional outbreak of uncontrollable emotion; but he became just that sort of man that every body feels he has not got to the bottom of. In such persons it may be saintliness wearing an unprepossessing exterior, or the effect of violent inward struggles, or the mere physical consequence of shattered nerves, or a morbid state of health, or what not. At any rate, there are persons about whom there is a certain *depth*—whether of gloom or of light—which the eye of the ordinary observer cannot fathom. I tell you these particulars, because without them you will not be able to understand how things came to be as they are.

“Oh, by the way, I forgot to mention that an expression that had fallen from Father Basil at the time was recalled to mind, and helped to the conclusion that was generally come to. He had been heard to say that he hoped God would enable him to take a just revenge upon Bertini for the wrong he had done him; or words to that effect. The expression might have meant only that he trusted he would have grace to take a *Christian's* just revenge upon his enemy by forgiving him, doing him good, and praying for him; but it was just one of those sayings which *may* have a bad meaning, and which, in certain circumstances, tell against a man with terrible effect. All these things were hunted out some years ago; for the provincial was so anxious to ascertain the truth about Father Basil, that he had the minutest inquiries made in Italy.

“Well, on the day in question, when Father Basil recognised Bertini in the coffee-room, he went up to him and shook hands with him. Bertini had been, it seems, some time in England, and spoke English pretty well. He did not, however, take Father Basil's greeting in a very friendly way, and soon began talking to the other people present in a very offensive manner about priestcraft, and monks, and other such irritating topics; with pointed hints at Father Basil as being a specimen of monastic duplicity and guilt. We never could make out satisfactorily how the thing got on; but it seems certain that it ended in a dispute, in which Father Basil lost his temper to some extent, and, goaded by Bertini's insults, at last left the room in a great hurry. Of course, we were anxious to do every thing with as little noise as possible; but still we could not bear the idea of doing injustice to Father Basil. So one of us was deputed to call privately upon some of the persons in the coffee-room at the time of the quarrel, and ask for their candid opinion. Some said one thing, and some another. Some declared that Father Basil's face looked perfectly frenzied and diabolical; others that he was merely dreadfully agitated and frightened; and one thought that he was plainly struggling with all his force to control himself under the insults he had received.

“That evening Father Basil arrived at St. Oswald's very late, long after the time when he ought to have been at home; and when he did arrive, the porter noticed traces of much agitation in his countenance, which was also deadly pale. The following morning Bertini was found dead in a field close to the wayside, on the road between — and St. Oswald's; the very road that Father Basil would have come. It appeared that he had been killed by the blow of a heavy stick; for there

was a severe wound on the temple, which had not bled much, but which was sufficient to cause death. Suspicion, of course, instantly fell on Father Basil.

“Happily for us, the investigation was conducted by a magistrate of sense and good feeling, who was desirous of doing his duty without prejudice to any one. Still, it was the merest accident that Father Basil was not tried for the murder; and the magistrate I speak of incurred great obloquy on the occasion. Whether he knew more of the matter than any one else, I can't say; but I fancy he did, and so put a stop to further proceedings. If the public had known one or two things which we knew, the affair must certainly have come to a trial. The walking-stick of the murdered man,—a heavy, peculiar-looking thing, almost a bludgeon,—was found to be in Father Basil's cell. He had brought it home the night before; and all the account he could give was, that he supposed he had taken it by mistake instead of his own when he left the coffee-room. His own walking-stick was never found. There was also a stain of blood on his coat-sleeve, and one of his hands was slightly wounded. Of this he could give no account; but he put it down to his having struck himself against the branch of a tree in riding fast through the woods. The account he gave of himself was, that in the agitation of his mind, under the insults he had received from Bertini, he had taken a wrong turning soon after leaving the town of —; and when some time afterwards he found that he was going wrong, he returned, as he imagined, in the direction of his first route. He, however, lost his way, got into the woods, and rode backwards and forwards, till at last he found himself in the right path, and arrived at home very late, exhausted in body and mind alike. I should tell you also, that a rosary was found close to the murdered man, which was of exactly the same make in every respect as several which we had been in the habit of making here. There was something peculiar about the beads, and there was a medal attached, which certainly belonged to some one of this place. The conclusion drawn was, that Father Basil had dropped it in the struggle supposed to have taken place. The pockets of the dead man were found unrifled; so that it was clear the crime had not been committed with a view to robbery.

“From the first Father Basil has rigidly maintained that he has no knowledge whatsoever of the matter. At the same time, there is not the faintest clue to trace it home to any one else. And what with one thing, and what with another, there is a general idea that he must be the man. Still, there is no strict proof; and I for one should not be surprised if he were

to be proved innocent at last, though how I can't conceive. On this ground, I have been always strongly of opinion that the provincial is perfectly justified in allowing Father Basil to go on with his duties like any other of us. He does not preach, it is true ; for he wishes not to do so. But he says Mass regularly ; he is one of the most punctual in the house at choir, and in observance of the rule in all respects he is a pattern to every one."

"May I ask if he hears confessions?" asked Brother Clement.

"He does,—that is, he has faculties ; but nobody will go to him except Brother Gregory, who stoutly maintains his innocence, and is as devoted to him as any religious can be to another without trespassing the spirit of his rule. The strangest part, perhaps, of the whole is, that there is a certain mysterious, incomprehensible feeling in the house about Father Basil. Out of doors I believe there is no end to the absurd nonsense that people say about him. But amongst ourselves there undoubtedly is a certain something which I can't explain or account for."

"But what a terrible thing it is for the community to have had such a thing happen, and to have the world outside talking as they do about it," said the novice.

"Indeed it is, I assure you," replied Father Benedict ; "it is a trial of the very severest kind. One good thing is, it serves to humble us all pretty effectually ; and whether Father Basil is guilty or not, he has been God's instrument in communicating many graces to us, I firmly believe. The thing that chiefly puzzles me, as well as others, on the supposition that he is innocent, is, the dread that he has of us all. It is not that he seems to be cowed, or to be concealing any thing. His countenance, with all its intense seriousness, is open enough ; and of course no one could be exactly cheerful and lively in his circumstances, however their conscience might acquit them. But there is a sort of scared way about Father Basil that is quite singular. He seems almost as if he had a knife run into him whenever he is obliged to be with any one for any length of time, or he is spoken to more than necessity requires. It's a great mystery, and a great trial ; but I think we are doing what is just to him, and no doubt we have the blessing of God upon it. And now I have told you all, tell me candidly if it removes your uncomfortable feelings."

"It more than removes them," replied the novice ; "it seems to enchain me with a sort of fascination. Only conceive, *if* Father Basil is innocent, what a martyrdom he must

be undergoing ! It quite frightens me to think of it. What should I do, if such a thing were to happen to me ?”

“My dear brother,” said the Father, “such a thing *might* happen to you, or any one else, living in the world. So I hope you will not fancy that this sort of thing is more *likely* to happen in the cloister than out of it.”

“That I see plainly,” said the young man ; “but I think the history must give almost a tragic interest even to the most trivial details of life in this house.”

“I feel that myself,” said the Father ; “but others have got more accustomed to it, and do not feel it pressing upon them as I do. And it is as well that it should be so, no doubt. People wonder, I believe, that Father Basil is not sent to some other of our houses, where he would not be known, and so the public scandal, such as it is, would be avoided. This was once thought of ; but Father Basil himself made so earnest a request to Father Provincial that he might be allowed to remain here, that the idea was given up. I must say, that he did not at all seem to be wishing to save his own character, merely as his own. He was convinced, he said, that the scandal to others would be less, on the whole, if he remained, than if he went away. There was a good deal to say on both sides of the question ; but Father Basil’s feelings turned the scale in favour of his remaining where he is. And I really don’t know of any instance of real harm that has been done to any one by it. It has humbled us all, and made us more careful than ever in our conduct, and that is a positive gain ; and in such cases as your own, where it has formed an actual stumbling-block, I believe that a little explanation has invariably removed the evil. Whether the mystery will ever be cleared up, God only knows.”

And so the conversation ended, and Brother Clement returned to his cell.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONVERSATION AT DINNER.

THERE was a small dinner-party at Burleigh Manor. It was one of Sir Reginald’s few sensible opinions that a dinner-party should consist of eight persons only. More, he said, spoils conversation. With more than eight, those at one end of the table cannot speak to those at the other ; and the whole thing is broken up into a series of dialogues between immediate neighbours.

On the present occasion, though the dinner was rather one of convenience than of formal arrangement, there were to be the correct number only. The Somersets, with their guest Mrs. Ogleby, formed half of the list ; the others were, Lord Pangbourne ; Mr. Thorburn, the owner of the property which Sir Reginald wished to purchase ; his sister ; and Mr. Croft, Sir Reginald's agent and man of business. The party was in fact arranged partly with a view to complete the contemplated transference of the Thorburn estate to the owner of Burleigh. Mr. Thorburn was a sporting squire, who never resided on the estate called by his own name ; and he was now come down with a view of getting rid of it altogether, and was occupying, with his sister, an unmarried lady, a small furnished house which belonged to him, and which was at present without a tenant.

The evening was looked forward to with different feelings by the different inmates of Burleigh. Lady Somerset hoped that Mr. Thorburn would present her with the puppies of a King Charles's spaniel of the purest breed, concerning which he had discoursed largely during a recent morning call. Sir Reginald was conning over all his choicest modes for making himself agreeable without the loss of his dignity, with the wish of bringing Mr. Thorburn to consent to more reasonable terms for the purchase of his estate. Mary Somerset's expectations may be estimated from a brief conversation she had with her mother just before she left her room.

"Mamma," said she, "you really must contrive not to let me sit near this Mr. Thorburn to-day at dinner."

"Why, my dear, I thought you would prefer any one to Lord Pangbourne, considering how you profess yourself bored by him."

"Yes," said her daughter, "Lord Pangbourne bores me ; but this Thorburn disgusts me. I can't tolerate him. A fellow with a soul not an inch above horses and hounds, who never speaks without slang, and talks about the 'female sex' till I long to horsewhip him. He is infinitely too free-and-easy for my taste."

"But, Mary," rejoined Lady Somerset, "would you have me put Mr. Thorburn next to Mrs. Ogleby ? Such a pious woman as she is will be shocked and distressed by his language. You know Mr. Thorburn is not of our religion, and he sometimes says things that would distress so devout a Catholic as good Mrs. Ogleby."

"My dear mamma," cried Mary, "do take my judgment for once. Mrs. Ogleby will be no more shocked by Mr. Thorburn's slang than I shall be by Lord Pangbourne's prosing."

Besides, I know the fellow likes widows, by the offensive way he talked about them the other morning. 'Miss Mary,' said he—why can't the man call me Miss Somerset?—'Miss Mary,' said he, with something very like a wink of his eye, 'widows are up to any thing.' And this was said in reference to Mrs. Ogleby herself, after I had told him, in answer to his question, that her husband was dead. I can't think why papa asks the man to dinner at all."

"You forget," replied her mother, "that Thorburn is for sale, and your papa is very anxious to buy it; though I am afraid it will be not so easy to raise the purchase-money."

Meanwhile, what were Mrs. Ogleby's own anticipations of the evening's entertainment? That exemplary lady sat in front of the large cheval-glass in her apartment, occupied in putting the finishing touches to her toilet. But let it not be imagined that her soul was filled with pictures of mere feminine vanity, or that it was through a simple girlish desire to appear well dressed that she found it difficult to please herself in the disposition of lace, ribbons, and jewels. Far from it. Mrs. Ogleby was this evening about to open her campaign in serious earnest. If she dressed well, it was with a view to a certain end. The vague speculations with which she had come to Burleigh were now taking a definite shape, and she saw before her more than one object worthy of the undivided devotion of her energetic efforts. Three unmarried gentlemen were to be in the house at the same time; and each one presented to her certain decided but distinct claims to be constituted the object of her pursuit.

"First," said she to herself, as she finally completed her adornments, "there is Lord Pangbourne. Far above me, indeed, and, I suspect, in love with this Mary Somerset. Moreover, his lordship is undeniably a prig, a dictionary, an encyclopædia, a dead weight upon the spirits. Dreadfully respectable too! But then his lordship is vain; and every vain man is a simpleton, and can be humbugged. Indeed, on the whole, I should say that a man vain of his knowledge and abilities is more easily flattered and won than any other of the vain species of humanity. Still, to catch Viscount Pangbourne is *rather* a bold stroke for Lætitia Ogleby.

"Then there is this squire. Faugh! The fellow's as coarse as his own huntsmen; but he's not exactly ugly, and his income, they say, is pretty fair. I heard what he said about widows the other day: that gives me my cue; it won't do to come the dashing widow with my friend Thorburn—it must be the modest retiring line. But then he won't stand piety, that I am confident of; these fellows never will. I

must be coy and sensitive. But if I *should*, as I expect, get Thorburn on one side of me and Croft on the other, how to manage the coy and sensitive without touching on the pious will be rather puzzling.

"It certainly won't do to say any thing to spoil a chance with Croft; for he may be the right man after all. Indeed, of him I am pretty certain. They say he's very rich and well connected, though he works at his profession as if he had not a farthing of his own. Only there's his never-changing gravity; could I stand that, and for life? Humph! it would be hard; but he might, yes, he must improve, or my name is not Lætitia Ogleby. His earnestness and seriousness sometimes almost frighten me. And they say he really *is* so good, and self-denying, and all the rest of it. Yet he's very clever, and has eyes that at times I don't quite fancy the look of. And what a handsome man! Why, if this baronet and this viscount and this squire were all put into a room together with Croft, and a stranger came in without knowing their names, my life on it he would take Croft for the viscount, and Pangbourne for the man of business. Well, we shall see. The great thing will be not to show my hand and betray my game. Ha, there's the dinner-bell!"

And with a parting glance at the cheval-glass, Mrs. Ogleby descended into the drawing-room.

At the dinner-table all were placed according to Miss Somerset's wishes. Mrs. Ogleby sat on one side, between Mr. Thorburn and Mr. Croft; on the opposite side were Miss Somerset and Miss Thorburn, with Lord Pangbourne dividing them.

"Fond of riding?" said Mr. Thorburn to Mrs. Ogleby, as soon as they were fairly seated. "Deuced fine sight, in my opinion, to see a fine woman go across country after the hounds."

"Very fond indeed," said the widow; "but a sad coward, I am ashamed to own. I used to ride a great deal in Mr. Ogleby's time; he was always buying me fresh horses, in hopes of overcoming my timidity; but I never could get over it. And yet he used to say that I sat a horse remarkably well."

Mary Somerset, upon whom Lord Pangbourne had not yet opened his heavy artillery, heard enough of this reply, though it was uttered in a low and modest voice, to catch its meaning, and to wonder how it was that the departed Ogleby, whom his spouse had hitherto represented as a tyrant, had so sedulously cultivated her equestrian skill. She could not help glancing across the table at the widow; and the latter,

though her eyes seemed fixed only on her plate, was perfectly aware of Mary's glance, and of its meaning also.

"Devilish good for the complexion," rejoined the squire; "that is, for those that want it, which you certainly do not."

"I am too old for compliments, Mr. Thorburn," said the lady; "and as time goes on, the cares and sorrows of life press so heavily, that one does not care for them any longer."

"No compliment, madam, I assure you," said the squire. "No hunting in this part of the world; that's the reason I so seldom show my face among my neighbours. I want to sell Thorburn too, for that very reason; and you know" (here he dropped his voice almost to a whisper) "the baronet is nibbling at it. Will he bite, do you think?"

"I've no doubt of it," replied Mrs. Ogleby, in an equally confidential tone.

"What are all those grand buildings, Lady Somerset," said Thorburn, turning to the said lady, who sat on his left hand, "that I passed yesterday near your church here—Saint Somebody's—what do you call it?—what is the man's name?"

"St. Oswald's," replied Lady Somerset. "The buildings are the additions to the monastery made since you were last here."

"Never heard of such a saint in my life before. Devilish sharp fellows some of those old saints, I'll bet a dozen of claret any day—eh? Mrs. Ogleby, what say you?"

Mrs. Ogleby did not know what to say, and therefore said nothing.

"And those were monks, I suppose, that I saw walking about in black cloaks, or some such queer-looking garments? No Bond-Street tailoring there, I fancy; eh, Lady Somerset?"

"They are holy and mortified men, I believe," said the lady appealed to.

"The deuce they are!" exclaimed the squire; "but up to a dodge for all that, I'll wager a sovereign. Splendid claret, no doubt, in the cellars at—what's the name of the place, Lady Somerset? Ah, yes, St. Oswald's; I had a filly of that name that promised to be one of the fastest horses of the day. That reminds me to ask you, Lord Pangbourne, as you know every thing, what was the meaning of calling those two celebrated racers 'Surplice' and 'Crucifix' by such out-of-the-way names?"

"A most offensive practice," responded the peer.

"Then you think the original owners of those horses weren't Catholics, who gave them those names out of religion and all that?"

"It is impossible," said the peer. "The falsehoods told of us are interminable."

"You don't say so?" said the squire. "But you can't persuade a man of the world like me that these monks and priests of yours are not the clever dogs we think them. Come now, that would be rather too strong."

"What do you mean, Mr. Thorburn?" asked Sir Reginald, not exactly liking the tone of his guest's conversation.

"Oh, mean? Sir Reginald?" said Thorburn; "don't tell me you don't know what I mean; why a nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse."

"I don't understand you," said the baronet, any thing but mollified.

Mrs. Ogleby whispered to Thorburn to drop the subject; but he did not take the hint.

"What! not about such things as confession and all that, eh?" said the determined squire. "By the way, it must come deuced heavy to a man of your rank and fortune, Sir Reginald."

"Allow me to observe, Mr. Thorburn," responded the baronet, "that I am totally in the dark as to your meaning."

"Why, God bless my soul! I mean your sins," said Thorburn.

"My sins!" echoed the baronet, actually putting down his knife and fork, and staring the squire in the face. "If I have any sins, what can that have to do with the subject of your allusion?"

"How much does it stand you in in the course of the year? That's what I mean," said the squire. "Of course you don't pay as a plain squire like myself; and your butler, now, gets off, no doubt, at half-price. (The butler and other servants here turned away their heads to smother their painful laughter.) "To my lord, now, the figure must be deuced high. This good lady here, no doubt, is taken at a low price. If I were a Catholic, and a family man, by Jove, I think I would compound for the whole, as one does for one's dogs. Have you any thing of that sort, my lord, in your arrangements?"

During the whole of this harangue the countenances of the listeners were nearly indescribable. Sir Reginald and Lady Somerset looked bewildered. Lord Pangbourne seemed charged to bursting with a volley of eloquence; Miss Somerset disgusted in the extreme, while her cheeks glowed with angry colour; Mr. Croft's habitual gravity appeared more intense than ever; and Mrs. Ogleby bit her lips almost till the blood came, and applied her handkerchief to her mouth to conceal her irrepressible smiles.

The viscount broke the silence which ensued for a few moments when the squire ceased.

"You do not seem perfectly well-informed on the history of the subject of sacramental penance," he began.

"The deuce a bit of it," interrupted the squire, suddenly pulling up the peer. "Never heard of such a thing in the whole course of my life."

"If you consult the records remaining of the earliest periods of the history of the Church—" resumed the peer.

"Rather dull reading, eh, Mrs. Ogleby," again interrupted the squire, in a subdued tone, to his neighbour.

"You will find the most distinct indications of the practices pursued in the Church at the present day," continued the determined peer. "I am not quite certain as to the exact date of the first instance that is recorded of the commutation of——"

"Oh, my lord, pray don't trouble yourself about it. I'm perfectly satisfied," cried Thorburn. "You know a confounded deal more of these sort of things than I do."

Instinctively conscious that Thorburn would not allow him to utter two consecutive sentences, however profound, Lord Pangbourne turned, slightly vexed, to Miss Somerset, and proceeded in his discourse. She, however, was now so much occupied with her own thoughts, that for some time she remained perfectly ignorant of the subject of the viscount's prosing, being aware only of a kind of physical sensation of rumbling in her ear. She ate and drank mechanically; till at last she woke up from her reverie, and discovered that somehow or other he had got from primitive Church discipline to Hindu mythology.

"As you know," he was saying, "the incarnations, avatars, or appearances of the deity Vishnu are very numerous. I have always thought there must be something peculiarly mysterious in his appearance as a tortoise——"

"Eh, my lord?" exclaimed Thorburn, who had caught some words of the viscount's which had excited his never-quiet curiosity; "what's that, if I may take the liberty of asking? Who's that Vishnu you were speaking of? I never heard of him in the whole course of my life."

The spirit of mischief seized upon Miss Somerset, and she forestalled the peer in his reply.

"Oh, don't you know, Mr. Thorburn?" she said; "Lord Pangbourne is telling me of the various appearances of Vishnu, the celebrated Hindu juggler at the London theatres. He once transformed himself into a tortoise before the eyes of the astonished audience."

The gravity with which this sally was uttered completely imposed upon the squire, and the viscount almost felt himself injured; but a look with which Miss Somerset favoured him assured him that she was not laughing at him, and his mind resumed its tranquillity, as Thorburn replied—

“Come, come, my lord, that’s coming it *rather* strong. I’ve not been out at grass long enough to take that in. Your lordship must excuse me, but——”

“She’s quizzing you,” whispered Mrs. Ogleby to the squire, scarcely turning her head towards him, so that no one but himself knew that she addressed him.

The squire turned as red as one of his own hunting-coats; for if there was any thing he hated, it was being made a butt of. He darted an angry but subdued look across the table at Mary, and actually sat silent for some minutes. Mrs. Ogleby saw that the shaft had struck home, and resolved to turn the wound to her own account. During the remainder of the dinner she made herself as agreeable as possible to the irritated vanity of the fox-hunter; and when the ladies left the dining-room he thought her the most charming widow he had ever had the happiness of knowing.

On entering the drawing-room, Lady Somerset subsided into a large chair, with her spaniels on her lap; Mary essayed in vain to make conversation with Miss Thorburn, who was a dull little piece of uneducated inanity, who sang ballads out of tune, and thought crochet-working one of the fine arts; and Mrs. Ogleby sat silent and reflecting.

“You seem meditative this evening, my dear Mrs. Ogleby,” said Lady Somerset; “what are you thinking of?”

“Nothing in particular,” replied the widow.

“Weaving the plot of a romance, perhaps?” said Miss Somerset, with as keen an eye on the lady as she dared fix upon her.

An instantaneous cloud passed over Mrs. Ogleby’s face, and as instantaneously was banished; but Mary saw that she had again hit harder than she intended, notwithstanding the amiable nothingness of Mrs. Ogleby’s reply.

“Oh, this unfortunate tongue of mine!” thought Mary, taking up a book; “what enemies I make with it! When shall I learn self-control? How can I be so foolish as to make this woman my enemy more than is necessary? If I am to do any thing to keep her from doing us harm, it is mere folly to go irritating her in this way. I am certain she’s a humbug, and I have a strong suspicion she means mischief; but if I make her my personal enemy, it will make the task of foiling her more difficult than ever; and it’s hard enough

already : my father and mother are absolutely infatuated with the woman. What *can* she be after? Is she after this wretched squire? Very likely; but we shall see. Oh, for a little composure and recollectedness of mind!"

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. OGLEBY'S CONFIDENCES.

OPENING out of the smaller drawing-room at Burleigh was a conservatory, shadowy with tall and graceful shrubs, and usually lighted up in the evening with two or three lamps, so that a dim and broken light pervaded the whole. Seats were placed beneath the most lofty of the shrubs, and formed a pleasant lounge on a warm summer evening.

The gentlemen had not long left the dining-room, and Mrs. Ogleby was already to be found on one of these seats, in deep shadow, and by her side the squire himself. Their talk was not of love, or sentiment, but of business. A tinge of love, it is true, coloured the thoughts of the fox-hunter, and the speculations of the lady were ever and anon irradiated by some ideas of a less prosaic character than acres, mortgages, and the revenues of Sir Reginald Somerset. These, however, were uppermost in the thoughts, and constituted the subject of the conversation between the worthy personages now in close communication.

"I'm sure of it, madam," said the squire, in the low voice in which the whole of the conversation was conducted; "I have it from unexceptionable authority. The Somersets are living beyond their means; and Sir Reginald, who is as proud as Lucifer, is put to it to keep up his present establishment. How he's to pay for Thorburn, if I sell it to him, the deuce knows; for I don't, unless he borrows more money from that crafty dog, Croft."

"You don't mean to say that Sir Reginald has already borrowed from Mr. Croft?" asked the lady in surprise.

"I do though, as sure as my name's Jack Thorburn; and I've a notion that Croft, the cunning rascal, has a mortgage on a part of the Burleigh estate itself."

"Is Mr. Croft really, then, a wealthy man, as they say he is?" asked she.

"I believe you," replied Thorburn. "People talk of preposterous sums, which of course are all fudge; but I *know*

that he is rich, very rich. Why the man goes on with his profession I can't conceive. He must lay by thousands every year."

The shadows of the foliage concealed the lady's countenance, or Mrs. Ogleby's thoughtful looks at this announcement would not have tended to diminish the squire's opinion that "widows are up to any thing." She took care, nevertheless, not to let the conversation flag, lest he should suspect that more was passing in her mind than she cared to utter. She sat silent a brief space, and then heaved a profound sigh.

"What's the matter, madam?" exclaimed Thorburn, surprised at this sudden display of emotion.

"Ah, Mr. Thorburn," said she, "I was wandering in thought away from Mr. Croft, and Sir Reginald, and the mortgage you were talking of. The sight of this beautiful conservatory woke up old feelings almost too painful to bear. You are a hearty prosperous man; but I'm sure you can make allowances for the sadness of those who have gone through as much as I have."

"I'm deuced sorry to hear it," cried the sympathising squire; "but what is there in this greenhouse place to make you miserable?"

"It reminded me of my poor father's favourite pleasures," said the widow, sighing again; "it was his favourite hobby; the conservatories, and greenhouses, and pineries, in my earliest home were the admiration of the whole county. The fortune my dear father spent upon them annually was immense; but it was nothing to him then; his income would have borne twice the outlay."

"But what's become of it all now?" asked Thorburn, bluntly.

"Gone from me to the heir-at-law," said the widow, "except some miserable twenty or thirty thousand pounds, that my man of business tells me by law is mine, and which he assures me will be in my possession within twelve months. The first legal steps for obtaining my rights are already taken."

The squire's value of the widow rose fifty per cent. Thirty thousand pounds! "A widow indeed," he said to himself. He instantly grew more tender, and, not very cleverly, threw a dash of the sentimental into the phrases with which he expressed his condolence with the good lady on her losses. But the widow was not to be deceived. She saw the squire through and through, and had already matured another step in her plans. Thorburn must be played off against Croft, and the eagerness of the former employed to stir up

the cold emotions of the latter. She knew, as well as if Thorburn had presented her with his banker's book, that his income must be inferior to that of Croft; and she shrewdly suspected that Croft was a rising man, and likely to be twice as rich as he now was before he died; and that Thorburn was, like Sir Reginald, living at the least fully up to his means.

More than this, Mrs. Ogleby was not altogether bereft of the feelings of humanity. The three possible husbands on whom she speculated were not equally indifferent to her as a matter of personal liking. The squire disgusted while he amused her. Lord Pangbourne's coronet did not prevent her from acknowledging to herself that his lordship was undeniably a bore. Mr. Croft at once attracted, repelled, awed, and irritated her. His handsome face, fine figure, singular gravity and earnestness, and entire superiority to all her arts, united with the fact that he never seemed, like Mary Somerset, to be suspecting her and searching into her secrets, produced a mixture of sensations in her mind whose true nature she could not comprehend. One effect upon her was clear; she was beginning to be conscious of a sort of intense determination to make him marry her, not from affection to him, but as an object capable of calling forth all the energies of her determined character. Hardly knowing why, she began to feel herself impelled to employ any opportunity that might turn up to aid in the advancement of Mr. Croft's fortunes. In this, moreover, she found a gratification for her passion for intrigue; a passion which ruled over every other in her bosom, and made her, with her great natural cleverness and iron will, a very dangerous person wheresoever she once established herself.

With the rapidity of a commander-in-chief, who in a few moments seizes the plan of a whole campaign, Mrs. Ogleby's genius sketched out for herself a complete scheme of operations, even while the blundering Thorburn was pouring his clumsy nonsense into her willing ear. She would command Croft's respect by a character for piety, steadiness, and self-denial; she would arouse his jealousy by flattering the eager attachment of the squire; and she would win his gratitude by aiding in the increase of his wealth,—an object which she felt confident was dear to the last degree to a man of his sedate and business-like habits and modest and almost parsimonious style of living. If any thing had been wanted to give an additional zest to her schemes, it would have been supplied by the dislike, every day growing more keen, which she felt to Miss Somerset. Any thing that would at once benefit herself and

injure Mary presented an attraction which she could scarcely resist.

"And so you think, Mr. Thorburn," said she, after a short pause, "that Sir Reginald will find it difficult to find the purchase-money for your property. May I ask how much you ask?"

"Twenty-seven thousand pounds," said Thorburn; "and I know Sir Reginald could not find twenty-seven thousand pence."

"Come now," said the widow, in her most insinuating tones, and lowering her voice to a confidential whisper, "do tell me,—as a friend, you know,—is Thorburn really worth that? It is impossible for *me* to be perfectly indifferent to your interests; and I should like to know the truth, in case I should be able ever so little to influence Sir Reginald's decision on the purchase."

"Honour bright?" asked the squire; "eh, Mrs. Ogleby? What, I suppose Sir Reginald likes a handsome widow for his adviser; eh, is that it?"

"I ask it out of the purest friendship to yourself," said Mrs. Ogleby, in a pathetic voice; "I am a friendless woman, Mr. Thorburn; but I have a heart, and I own I was touched by your kind interest in my happiness."

"Well, then," responded he, "in the strictest confidence, you know,—the estate is devilishly out at elbows, and I shall be precious glad to get rid of it at that price, or even less. But remember, honour bright, eh?"

"Sir Reginald shall not hear one word of what you have said, my dear sir," replied Mrs. Ogleby. "I have your interest too much at heart. And you think he must borrow the money on mortgage from this Mr. Croft?"

"I'm confident of it," said Thorburn. "The baronet was fool enough to let out something of the kind to me himself, when we were going over the estate. Besides, I overheard him say something about it to Croft."

"Dear me, how late it is!" exclaimed the lady. "We must not stay longer here, or we shall be talked about."

Mrs. Ogleby, however, wished it to be supposed that the squire was smitten with her charms; and therefore re-entered the drawing-room with an air of hurry and self-consciousness, and was delighted to see that for once Mr. Croft's eye was fixed observantly upon her.

(To be continued.)

PROTESTANTISM IN THE PRESENCE OF THE CHURCH.
THE AUSTRIAN CONCORDAT.

THE English world has unwittingly been recently furnishing one or two striking illustrations of the truth of the Catholic religion. An "illustration," we may premise, of the truth of any system, is practically a "proof" of a peculiarly cogent kind. Many a mind which is not equal to the fully grasping of what are strictly called the proofs of a statement is powerfully impressed with the force of those facts which may be termed the "corollaries" of the proposition in question. This is peculiarly the way with those who term themselves emphatically *practical* people. They either cannot or will not enter into the merits of any system that comes before them theoretically only. They turn up their noses at the whole affair as something speculative,—*i. e.* whimsical,—and unworthy the notice of a man who is in thorough earnest. They do not comprehend things in the abstract. They cry out for some tangible result, which they can hear, taste, or handle,—just as, by the way, the Pagans cannot do without gods whom they touch with their hands and see with their eyes. Whatever the subject be,—religious, moral, political, agricultural, astronomical, or what not,—they are never thoroughly convinced till they see the working of what looks so perfect on paper.

No doubt, in some respects, this anti-theoretical habit is a laudable and prudent virtue. Considering the fallibility of the human intellect, there are certainly few things that can be trusted till they are tried. It is only in its exaggerations, and its conceited contempt for scientific reasoning, as such, that this "practical" spirit is to be condemned. Good or bad, however, it is certainly a characteristic of our worthy fellow-countrymen. An Englishman glories,—not by any means in the spirit of intellectual modesty,—in being a practical man. Theory is all very well, he thinks, for drowsy Germans and excitable Frenchmen; but give *him* the results of experience, and all your scientific speculations may go to the winds. We may rest assured, that if all the world had ever been like ourselves, Euclid's Elements would never have been discovered; and the human race would have known no more of the mysteries of the algebraic x , y , and z , than popular Protestantism knows of the real facts of Catholicism.

With our worthy fellow-countrymen, then, the kind of "illustrations" we speak of are peculiarly adapted to be of

practical efficacy. They show our religion in its results; and those results being precisely what they would be on the supposition that our religion is true, we point to them as corollaries to the reasoning by which we establish the divine origin of our faith. We contrast them with the practical results of Protestantism. We say that they are the logical and necessary consequences of the truth of our faith, and that they are visible manifestations of the reality of that supernatural agency which our faith declares to be existing around us and within us, unseen by the bodily eye and unheard by the bodily ear.

The only difficulty that lies in our way in bringing these arguments home to our fellow-countrymen is this, that they will persist in their inconsistent reasoning to the end. Their boastings of justice and candour all vanish into air the moment the Catholic appears on the scene. Proofs, irrefragable in the case of a Protestant, prove nothing at all in the case of a Papist. When *we* have done every thing that can be legitimately required of *them*, it turns out that we are accounted as having done nothing at all worth mentioning. If *they* act up to their professions, they are to be held as at least consistent. We, on the other hand, are not to be tried by any professions of our own. We may say that such and such is our creed, and this creed we assert to be true; but the world first disproves the doctrines we do *not* hold, and then denounces us for holding them. We maintain, that there is only *one* true and pure gospel; this shows that we pervert *the* one true gospel. We condemn mistranslations of the Scriptures; this shows that we hate *the* Scriptures. We conditionally re-baptise Protestant converts, on their own confessions of Protestant carelessness in baptising; this proves that we insult the Sacrament of Baptism. We refuse to pay spiritual obedience to the temporal sovereign of the country; this means that we pay temporal homage to a foreign prince. We believe that God gives grace through the Sacraments; this proves that we care nothing for grace, but place all our trust in forms and ceremonies. We hold that a purgatory must purify the soul from every stain of sin before it enters heaven; this implies that we believe that the worst sinners will be saved if the priest absolves them. Truly the round of Protestant objections to Catholicism is the most delightfully ludicrous collection of *non-sequiturs* that the annals of reasoning can supply. Take up any book of curious fallacies, and you will find it far outmatched in absurdities by the infallible proofs by which sensible, solid, practical English Protestantism establishes the wickednesses and follies of us poor, ignorant, unreasoning,

priest-ridden Papists. Accordingly, it is no easy matter to get the public, or any single individual, to reason consistently on such facts as those which the last few weeks have supplied. Though they are exactly what we should look for on the supposition that Catholicism is true, the world most complacently walks away with its nose in the air, more convinced than ever that Protestant England is the most enlightened, the most moral, the most consistent, the most justice-loving, the most Christian nation that ever did the earth the honour of existing upon it. In fact, it is the model-nation of mankind; and Christianity ought to be very obliged to it for setting its seal upon its truth, and recommending it, by its own example, to the acceptance of the semi-barbarous races who make up the rest of the human family.

To one of these exhibitions of illogical fanaticism,—the anti-Bible-burning prosecution in Ireland,—we have elsewhere referred. But still more striking illustrations of the truth of our religion are to be found in the reception of the Austrian Concordat by the popular voice, and in the proceedings at a recent meeting of notabilities in London intended to do honour to Miss Nightingale. We do not know whether the proceedings at this same meeting have attracted much notice among Catholics, but certainly, to our eyes, they furnish one of the most curious illustrations of the real nature of the contest between Catholicism and Protestantism that we ever met with. The Austrian Concordat, however, first calls for our attention.

What, then, are those particular Catholic doctrines which we may expect to see in practical operation around us in such combinations of circumstances as those presented by this new Concordat?

The Catholic Church maintains that Almighty God, in the carrying out of His economy for the salvation of souls, has erected on earth a spiritual corporation; of course visible, insomuch as its members are men, and as its work is conducted through material agencies; but yet in essence a spiritual corporation, whose aims refer to eternity, and only to time as bearing upon and leading to eternity. This corporation, by its very nature, is one. Its office is to preach one gospel; to be the channel of one Holy Ghost, and the representative of one Saviour; to teach and enforce one rule of life for all mankind. Consequently, however manifold may be its actions, and however widely spread its ramifications, by the unchangeable law of its being it must never cease to remain one organised whole, ruled by one superior authority, following one rule of discipline, and subject to no co-ordinate or higher power of any temporal kind whatsoever. All this is

involved in the first idea of a divinely-erected Church, which is at once spiritual and visible. It must be united; it must be free.

At the same time, the Catholic faith teaches that the race among which this corporation has to do its work is by its natural propensities in perpetual antagonism to that God who appoints this very Church for its benefit. The human race is not only fallen from innocence, but its judgment is so blinded and so much in the power of an evil supernatural influence, that its first impulse is to set itself vehemently *against* those blessings which its Almighty Saviour offers to it. Extraordinary and astounding as is the idea, it is nevertheless the fact, that there is a universal inclination in the whole human race to resist the progress of that spiritual corporation which is the appointed channel for its restoration to the divine favour. It not only does not recognise her claims, discern her beauties, or comprehend her spirit; it actually delights in misrepresenting her, in maligning her, in cursing, opposing, and persecuting her. This, no doubt, is only a necessary consequence of the original fault in the human disposition towards God Himself. If men have no love for God by nature, of course they have no love for that Church which is the visible embodiment of His Presence, and actually possesses God Himself within her. If the world was naturally friendly towards the Catholic Church, it would be an infallible sign that the Catholic Church was not from God. Man naturally turns away from God, and by consequence he also turns away from the Church of God.

Here, however, a new element enters into the natural antagonism between the Christian Church and the world. By the natural law, which the Divine Creator designed to be the guide of human society, viewed as a purely temporal thing, the immense multitude of mankind is divided into many distinct divisions. Geographical and other causes assign certain limits to each of these divisions, which require but a very few years to grow into strongly-marked sections of the entire human family, each standing more or less by itself, each depending on its own resources for its existence, and united in itself by some special temporal organisation of its own, and subject to a supreme authority acknowledging allegiance to no other power upon earth. This vast system of nations is, then, of originally divine institution, as really as is the system of the Catholic Church. Each comes, as a matter of fact, from God Himself; and each has a right to be obeyed by the individuals who are the subjects of its rule.

This temporal organisation, moreover, being originally de-

signed with a special view to earthly and not spiritual advantages, has naturally continued to exist and flourish notwithstanding the universal alienation of the human character from God. It was first of all erected with the view to furthering the material and transitory interests of the race; and as our race did not cease to exist, and in a certain sense to prosper, through the fall of Adam, the organisation of the nations, as an essential element of human life and prosperity, has never ceased; nor has it lost its really divine claim to the obedience of individual men.

Like every thing else, however, that has remained in man's possession since the fall, this temporal organisation has been infected with a tendency to destroy those for whose benefit alone it was at first designed. Wonderful, beautiful, consoling, and supporting, as is the world of nature,—both physical, intellectual, and, we may add, moral, even in its degraded condition,—the perverted disposition of the natural mind in regard to God is incessantly contriving to convert this boundless system of good into an instrument of spiritual suicide. The purest affections, the most obligatory duties, the most exact science, the noblest works of genius, every possible element of our life and enjoyment,—the perverse ingenuity of the alienated mind abuses in some way or other, so as to make it stand between itself and its God.

Now to suppose that the natural system of political organisation is alone to be exempted from this tendency to deadly abuse is as philosophically irrational as it is found to be in contradiction to actual facts. If there is nothing else of divine creation, which is not, as things are, made a weapon for eternal self-destruction, why should kings and parliaments be the only good things which naturally serve the cause of Jesus Christ and His Gospel? What possible exemption can they claim from the general curse which God inflicted upon His works after Adam's fall? It is written that God cursed the earth, immediately after it is recorded that when He looked upon the work of His hands, He had declared it to be very good. That curse, undoubtedly, does not mean that the earth was consigned to that horrible state of malediction which the followers of Calvin suppose. The earth, and man who lives on it, are still, in the natural order and allowing for certain grievous evils, good. But it is not, by its nature, the instrument of man's salvation. Rather it furnishes us with a boundless variety of means and excuses for our intolerable selfishness and overweening pride.

And the system of political organisation has suffered this blight with every thing else. Human society, from the fa-

mily up to the nation, has become one of the most formidable antagonists which the Gospel has at all times had to encounter. The individual man, in his natural opposition to Christianity, is bad enough; but the social man, the member of the confederated national body, is far worse. It has been cleverly said, on account of the shamelessness in ill-doing which men exhibit when acting as a body corporate, that a corporation enjoys an immunity from punishment because it has neither a body to be kicked nor a soul that can feel. So it is with the temporal power in its relations with the Christian Church. The worst sufferings of Christians have ever been inflicted under the sacred name of legitimate temporal authority.

Again; as is the case with other doctrines of Christianity, there is one primary truth which comes into peculiar conflict with this natural abuse of the temporal power. Every dogma and every duty of religion finds its own special antagonist in some one element in human nature, or in some object naturally good, but perverted by self-will and stupidity. In the case of the rights of the secular authority of each nation, the spiritual supremacy of the Pope is the one chief point in Christianity which awakens all the hostility of the unenlightened mind. The passions of man, unwilling to turn away from the exclusive enjoyment of this life, and to accept eternity as the only thing worth living for, blind the judgment so that persons of the clearest capacities in secular things literally cannot see that eternity is better than time, and that an authority whose scope is exclusively temporal has, by the very law of its being, no right to control the actions of a power whose rights are of a spiritual nature. If there is a self-evident proposition in moral science—a truth of which it may be almost said that it is mathematically certain—it is this, that eternity is of boundless importance to man as compared with his present existence. To deny, therefore, that it is of primary importance to each individual soul that it should be free to arrange its eternal affairs unhampered by any secular interference, is a thing nothing short of monstrous, viewed merely logically. You might as rationally say that the whole of a thing is not greater than a part of it, as tell me that any earthly power has a right to stand between me and the conduct of my soul's affairs, according to that rule of conduct which revelation has prescribed. Of all the detestable tyrannies that ever cursed the human race, there never has been one so abominable and so irrational in principle as that which seizes hold of the soul through the means of the body, and insists upon a man's being damned because he happens to be an Englishman, a Dutchman, or a Swede.

Yet this is precisely what every man is justifying who is now falling foul of the Pope and the Emperor of Austria on account of this new Concordat. What *is* this wicked Concordat, let us ask? what new enormities does it exact? What fresh fetters does it forge for suffering humanity? What novel exhibition of despotism does it supply? In plain words, it is nothing else than a decree for perfect liberty of conscience for all Catholics in the Austrian dominions. Every Catholic, by the first law of the constitution of the Church, owns no supreme spiritual authority except the Pope. In the humblest village curate he sees a minister of Jesus Christ, whose title to minister to himself emanates from the Pope, and who has not the shadow of a right to exercise his functions except with the Papal sanction. His first demand, therefore, is that no human power shall stand between himself and that supreme authority which he venerates as the representative of Jesus Christ. Tell him that his shepherd is no shepherd, and that if he wants to feed in green pastures, he must put himself under the protection of the wolves; and you get a fair way of putting the impudent nonsense of that world which cries out for the protection of the civil government to guard the private Christian against the tyranny of the Pope. A blessed protection indeed! a truly hallowed liberty! And this from the men who are continually taunting us Catholics with the cruelties of the Spanish Inquisition, the Smithfield fires, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew! Who, we ask, perpetrated these bloody deeds, but certain Catholic governments who were the main upholders of that very system which the new Concordat abolishes? If there is one historical fact that is beyond a doubt, it is that the great Catholic cruelties have invariably been perpetrated by so-called Catholic sovereigns, whose system it has been to try to stand between the Pope and their Catholic subjects. As for our own poor Queen Mary, personally speaking, this is not the case with her; for we believe that if let alone she would have been a far more lenient person. But the men by whose advice the Smithfield fires were lighted were Catholics, both clerical and lay, of that very school which seeks to check the action of the Papacy in the spiritual affairs of the various kingdoms of the world. Philip of Spain and Charles of France were Catholics of a very different stamp from the present Emperor of Austria. If we want specimens of Catholics of the true persecuting school, whose delight it is to kiss the dirt that kings and queens tread upon, and who would burn and torture Protestants without remorse, they are to be found in her Majesty's service at this present moment, receiving Lord Palmerston's

wages, and taking the sacred name of religion in vain, while they are ready to persecute a poor Redemptorist for doing his Master's work in a way that they disapprove.

When, then, we hear the popular outcry against the Austrian Concordat, as a thing for enslaving the Austrian people to the sway of a foreign prelate, we first of all laugh at the exquisite absurdity of the notion; and then reflect that it is precisely what was to have been looked for, on the supposition that Catholicism comes from God. Mankind being by nature proud, passionate, ignorant of God, and unwilling to give up time for eternity, it follows, of course, that when people witness a great public act which declares—not in talk only, but practically—that time is nothing, and that the good things of this life are nothing, and that kings and parliaments are nothing, and that a man is nobody merely because he is an Englishman, or a Frenchman, or an Austrian,—it follows of course, we repeat, that their natural animosity to Christianity is stirred to its very depths. They cannot control themselves for anger, when they see one of those very kings whom they would set up as gods acknowledging that his authority, being also divine, must take exactly that lower place in the universal order which God has assigned to it.

Of course, too, this outcry is seasoned with its due proportion of cant. A rogue is nothing without a decent coat; and a falsehood must needs be as plausible to the ignorant as if it were truth itself. What is an affront to Almighty God without a text of Scripture to back it? Accordingly, those who wish to prevent the Pope from regulating Catholic affairs without hindrance from princes have a large stock of phrases, of most telling efficacy, with which they hide the naked deformity of their pretensions. The one grand device, however, has always been the same. The old lie is as fresh as in the days of Pontius Pilate. It does duty in the English newspapers in exactly the same way as it did in the hall of justice at Jerusalem eighteen hundred and twenty-two years ago: "Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." From the day when Pilate was terrified by this saying into crucifying Jesus Christ, the world has never ceased to employ it in order to resist the spread of Christianity and the free action of the Holy See. Our Blessed Lord came as a spiritual Sovereign; the Jews hated Him; and the device they hit on was to embroil Him with the Roman power by representing Him as a foreign prince who tampered with the allegiance of the people. It is at once the trial and the glory of the Pope that the same accusation is made against him. A petty prince, viewed as a temporal sovereign—no prince at all, in fact; for he

cannot keep his throne by his own power—the multitude of his spiritual enemies represent him as the chief of a foreign state, seeking to interfere between governments and their subjects, and to upset the legitimate order of things in every other country. Were it not for the serious nature of the question involved, the idea would be something too ludicrous to reason on. Pius IX., that mighty monarch, making himself sovereign of that puny state known to geographers and the curious by the name of Austria! Probably we shall soon see a detachment of six of the Papal Swiss guards bombarding London, and taking Queen Victoria off to the Vatican a prisoner in a Thames wherry.

Still, the cry succeeds. It answers; that is the great thing. It appeals to certain deep passions in the human breast, and justifies a man in being extremely wicked under the pretence of being extremely virtuous. What more can be desired? And go on it will, as long as there are emperors, kings, presidents, and parliaments, whose aim it is to have all things their own way; and populations made up of selfish men, who care nothing for Almighty God and eternity. Over and over again we shall be doomed to hear the same story. Popery is anti-national, therefore it is bad. The Pope calls himself the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and that means that he wants to establish a despotism in every nation and at every fireside. It is perfectly useless to point out the facts of the case, and to show people that the Pope cannot be the feeble monarch whom they love to taunt for his poverty, his helplessness, and the incapacity of his officials; and at the same time a tremendous potentate, whose least word is enough to make an actual emperor shake in his shoes, and cause a mere queen to take to her bed with fright. It is bootless to remind people of the greatness of Austria and the littleness of the Papal States, as showing that the whole affair must be a spiritual and not a temporal question. We shall make no impression on our enemies. They will go on to enslave us in the name of liberty as long as the world lasts.

Why, too, should we expect Englishmen to be different from all the rest of mankind in the attitude they assume against the Church? What they do now, other nations do, and have done from the first. There is not the smallest difference between the talk of English Protestants now and that of Roman pagans when Christianity began to make itself felt in the old Roman empire. "Christianity," said the old Roman, "is anti-national; it sets up an *imperium in imperio*; it comes from a wretched, semi-barbarous, out-of-the-way race of Jews, and has the impudence to place a low Syrian fisherman on a

level with Roman citizens,—yes, far above them; and it says that the religion they have chosen is a falsehood. It burns their sacred images (false Bibles); it overthrows their temples (will not join in Protestant worship); it declares that the Pontifex Maximus is an impostor (declines to acknowledge the Archbishop of Canterbury to be a real bishop); down with it to the ground. Shall Rome be mistress of the world, and bow down to a crucified Jew?" We had almost forgotten that eighteen centuries have elapsed, and had written, "Shall England beard the Czar of Russia in his own fortresses, and submit to a runaway Italian priest?"

Or, take a people as unlike either the old Jews or the old Romans as is possible within the varieties of the human race—the Chinese of this day; there we have the cry of the Jews before Pilate, and the articles of the English newspapers, as faithfully reproduced as if each man had actually copied from his neighbour. No nation ever professed universal toleration on such truly scientific and philosophical principles as does the empire of China. They have attained to the very perfection of agreement as to the equal merits of all religions in the eye of the secular power. In private, moreover, among themselves, they delight in reciprocating compliments towards each other's creeds, which must make the mouths of English Dissenting ministers, when snubbed by an Anglican ecclesiastic, water with envy. When persons not acquainted with each other meet for the first time, it is customary to ask to "what sublime religion" you belong. One, perhaps, will call himself a Confucian, another a Buddhist, a third a disciple of Lao-tze, a fourth a follower of Mahomet; and then every one begins to pronounce a panegyric on the religion to which he himself does *not* belong, as politeness requires; after which they all repeat in chorus, "Pou-toun-kiao, toun-ly,—Religions are many; reason is one; we are all brothers." This phrase is on the lips of every Chinese, and they bandy it from one to the other with the most exquisite urbanity.*

Nevertheless, when it comes to the question of tolerating Christianity, these beautiful professions vanish into air. There is freedom for Buddhism, for Confucianism, for Mahometanism; but for the followers of Jesus Christ there are fetters, torments—often so horrible that the blood curdles to think of them—and death. And the remarkable point is, that the ground on which the Chinese persecute the Christians is literally the same as that on which the English public attack Catholicism. They say it is an anti-national religion; that it makes its followers disaffected towards the Chinese government; that

* Huc's China.

they take up with a temporal allegiance to some monarch or other of the "Western devils," as the people of the Celestial Empire term us Europeans. It is perfectly useless to argue the question with the Chinese authorities, to point out to them that, so far from introducing sedition into kingdoms, it actually makes obedience to authority a Christian duty. They will not hear; they will not understand. The same mysterious law of antagonism between human nature and the kingdom of Christ is at work in China at this day, which eighteen centuries ago caused the blood of thousands of martyrs to flow in Rome, and which we see in daily action in this England of our own. Every thing is to be tolerated except Catholicism;* every thing is a "form" of truth except this one creed. The more a man acts up to his religious principles, whatever they are, the better citizen he becomes; except in the case of

* A delicious specimen of the British way of interpreting the toleration principle occurs in a recent letter from that very pushing personage, "John Cumming," who is in the habit of flattering the *Times* in order to get his anti-popish epistles inserted in its columns.

"Let us suppose," says our learned doctor, "that St. Peter, who, Dr. Wiseman says, was his first Pope, were to rise from the dead and appear in our metropolis. Suppose there were drawn up on his right hand Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists; and, on his left hand, Redemptorists, Passionists, Carthusians, Jesuits, and other friars; and he were to hear from each file a claim to be his children; I am sure he would say, looking to his right, 'Dr. McNeill, Norman McLeod, Mr. Binney, and Baptist Noel, I know;' and, turning round to his left and gazing at the motley and extraordinary group arranged there, he would add, 'but pray, gentlemen, who are you?'"

Dr. Cumming's name, in connection with that of Cardinal Wiseman, reminds us also of a certain advertisement which appeared in the *Times* on the very same page with the letter from which is quoted the above specimen of truly Chinese toleration, and which is too good not to be embalmed in our own pages. It thus runs:

PROPHETICAL MEETING, Hanover-square Rooms.—The London Prophetic Society, recently formed for Promoting the Study of the Prophetic Word, and for the General Diffusion of Information on the Subject, will hold a PUBLIC MEETING in the above Rooms (D.V.) on Friday next, December 7, at half-past 7 o'clock.

R. C. L. BEVAN, Esq., in the chair.

The Rev. W. Cadman, Rector of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, will read a Paper on "The Importance of the Study of Prophecy." And the Meeting will afterwards be addressed on the same subject by Colonel Rowlandson, the Rev. W. Pennefather, Rear-Admiral Vernon Harcourt, the Rev. J. Baillie, the Rev. J. W. Reeve, the Rev. Samuel Garratt, and others. All friends interested in the Study of Prophecy are invited to attend. The Meeting will close about 9.

WILLIAM PENNEFATHER, M.A.

JAMES BAILLIE, M.D.

JOHN BAILLIE

E. GARDINER FISHBOURNE, Capt. R.N.

} Hon. Secs.

It will be remembered, that one or more of the vaticinating warriors who here undertake to expound futurity accompanied the said Dr. Cumming in his visit to Cardinal Wiseman, when he offered his Eminence that personal insult which was introduced into our burlesque, "The Telegraph and the Confessional." What a queer world is this in which we live!

the Catholic. It matters nothing that no Protestant sect has any distinct code of morals or doctrine, and that its followers may be perfectly consistent adherents to their professions and yet never dream of making obedience to the laws a duty; it matters nothing that we Catholics have a distinct code of laws, and that obedience to the law of the land is a part of that code;—all this is nothing. We are not to be allowed to cite our own documents to explain our own meaning; to call attention to the facts of history as they really are. Our accusers are to be our judges; men who know nothing of us are to decide about every thing that we do and say; and throughout the whole chorus of execration this one shout rises, repeated with every possible variety of insult—"Who-soever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar."

Let us now turn to the meeting held in order to do honour to Miss Nightingale and the "Sisters" who shared her labours as nurses to our army in the East. This gathering was a representation of the whole aristocratic, philanthropical, political, and theological portions of the English people. A more thoroughly "respectable" meeting of the *élite* of the influential sections of the upper classes was perhaps never got together in London. The object was one eminently creditable to its promoters; and it was one, moreover, eminently calculated to diminish the bitterness of theological hostility, and to call forth whatever elements of honour and justice might exist in the breasts of those who took a part in it.

Now, would it be believed by any one not conversant with British Protestantism, that during the whole of the cordial and enthusiastic proceedings of this gathering, nothing escaped the lips of any man which implied even the existence of the Catholic nuns, without whom the whole work of charity, so vehemently lauded, would have fallen to the ground as soon as commenced? Every word was so contrived as to make the entire affair appear the work of English Protestants alone. If it had been stated that no Catholic nuns acted as nurses to the British army, their existence could not have been more practically denied. Yet it is known to every one conversant with the facts of the case, that Miss Nightingale would have been lost without the English and Irish nuns. No one knows it better than Miss Nightingale herself, and than Mr. Bracebridge, a gentleman who, with his wife, was associated with Miss Nightingale. Mr. Bracebridge, too, took part in the meeting; but he either would not, or dared not, breathe the name of those but for whose advice and example he would not have been there that day at all.

Of the scandalous shamelessness of this conduct on the

part of these boasting Protestants we say nothing; though it is, as a matter of deep injustice, nothing less than wicked. But we cannot help referring to it as a fresh proof of the intensity of that dread of every thing that is most holy and heroic in Catholicism, which is a characteristic of Protestantism, and which stamps it at once as a fatal delusion. Why should these peers and gentlemen have kept silence on the heroic virtues of the nuns, but because they *dared* not look their virtues in the face? Why should they practically be guilty of a cruel falsehood, but because in their secret hearts there is a horror of every manifestation of the supernatural power of Divine grace in the actions of living Catholics? What is the explanation of this extraordinary phenomenon; this anomaly in the character of honourable men; this portent in human nature itself? Account for it, if you can, on any other hypothesis than this, that the Catholic faith is from God, and that the virtues of Catholic nuns awake in the breasts of men of the world just that horror which the presence of our Blessed Lord on earth awoke in evil spirits and in men of the world of that day. This crying injustice, we repeat, is just what we should have expected from Protestantism, on the supposition that it is a deception of the enemy, and that it trembles at the approach of Jesus Christ. It is not so with us. The sight of the good works of a Protestant causes in us no fear lest he should pervert pious Catholics to his errors. On the contrary, the more religious he is, according to his knowledge, the more hopes we have of his conversion to the true faith; the more ready we are to associate with him, to inform him about ourselves, and to say to him what we should hardly say to the worse specimens of his school. But, in the judgment of Protestants, the worse a Catholic is, as a Catholic, the more hopes they have of perverting him. When a Catholic violates his conscience, Protestantism begins to think well of him; and the more pious he is, the more hopeless it accounts his perversion to heresy. And what is all this, but a token that the grace of God is with us; that we instinctively love its manifestations wherever they appear; that we have eyes that can detect the faintest sparks of the love of God and of a desire for truth, in the midst of the fog and gloom of the world? Once more we ask, if Catholicism is false, why is it that we instinctively feel that the more consistently a Protestant acts up to his conscience, the more likely he is to be a Catholic; while Protestants look upon an immoral inconsistency in a Catholic as the first step towards Protestantism?

WHO ARE THE REAL BIBLE-BURNERS?

To the Editor of the Rambler.

SIR,—When I wrote the letter that you did me the honour to insert in the *Rambler* of last month, I must say that I had a lurking impression that Father Petcherine, who had the happiness of bringing back about sixty souper families of Kingstown to their duties, might very possibly in his zeal and triumph have committed the very pardonable indiscretion of superintending the cremation of the symbols and seals of their apostasy. When a family has by the potent argument of oatmeal and soup been converted to the established religion, the first sign, the seal of the new profession, is probably the acceptance of a Bible and Prayer-book. These books are offered in contempt of the Catholic religion, and in order to bring it into disrepute, by making the people suppose that it is inimical to the Bible. To the wretched soupers the Bible thus becomes the very instrument of sin; and however one might treat an inoffensive book, one cannot be very angry with the penitent souper if he treats the offending paper as his outraged feelings and conscience would impel him. Protestants, we suppose, have insulted the Cross, the sign of our redemption, without intending thereby to insult Christianity in general. They can, then, easily understand how a Catholic may burn a Bible without intending any insult to religion. Naturally a man loves and cherishes his own body; but that precious Protestant martyr, Cranmer, has been the theme of endless panegyric because he thrust his hand, with which he had signed his recantation, into the fire, exclaiming, “This unworthy right hand!” It may, then, be sometimes right to wreak (so to say) our vengeance on some unoffending thing, if this thing has been the instrument of our sin. The right eye, or the right hand, that causes our fall, is to be plucked out or cut off, and cast away. Do Protestants really value a sixpenny Bible more than their eyes or their hands? If not, the Bible itself will teach them that the Bible by which they sin is to be thrown away.

With these ideas, I thought the alleged Bible-burning by the Redemptorist Fathers justifiable, and therefore probable. But the evidence has, I must say, quite changed my opinion. If the Bibles of the reconverted soupers were to be burnt, how is it that only one Bible and one Prayer-book are proved to have been among the books? How is it that these two books managed to shake themselves to the top of their respective

barrows? Is it not evident that the Bibles must have been carefully gleaned from the crowd of bad books brought in, and that these two books were either left by accident, or, what is more probable, added to the barrow-loads on their passage by some Protestant peacemaker? Any how, it is quite evident that Father Petcherine never intended to assist at a wholesale and indiscriminate and public burning of a mixture of Bibles and other bad books. If he had left a Bible or two in the heap, it was an accident; but probably they had been put there by other hands.

But even supposing the case to have been as the Protestants suspected, supposing (the utmost they could attempt to prove) that Father Petcherine had coolly stood by a fire in which he knew or believed that Bibles were burning,—this evidently would have not been in order to insult the Bible itself, but for a quite different object, namely, “disrespect, discredit, and dishonour” to the wretched souping missionaries who had distributed the book as a symbol of their work. And yet this act, the standing by while a Bible is burning, with the intention thereby of protesting against the acts and motives of a certain set of religionists, is interpreted by our law to be done “to the high displeasure of Almighty God” (Mr. Keogh is doubtless well acquainted with the secrets of heaven), “and the great disrespect, discredit, and dishonour of the religion established by law.” The act of assisting at a Bible-burning, with the motive of bringing any one’s Christianity into disrepute, is, it appears, by our law thus interpreted.

But now, who acted in this way? Not Father Petcherine; a jury has acquitted him of it; and no one can say without slander that he did it. But there are others who, by their own confession, evidently were guilty of this act. They were two of the witnesses against the reverend father; and for all we know were the very people who, by themselves or their agents, put the books in question on the barrows. Allow me to transcribe parts of the cross-examination.

The Rev. Robert Wallace, Baptist minister (we believe), stood without the rails of the chapel-yard, and saw little boys kicking what he believed to be Bibles into the fire. He is thus cross-examined:

“Was there any thing to prevent you from going into the chapel-yard?—No. . . .

Do you consider it the duty of a Christian minister, who saw what he thought to be Bibles kicked into the fire, to stand by and allow that to be done?—I saw the policeman there, and I took it for granted that the boys were acting by direction; and I did not think it right to interfere.

But did you think it right not to ascertain what the books were?—No.

Did you speak to the policeman on the subject?—No, I did not.

How long were you there altogether?—About ten minutes.

And for ten minutes you stood by and saw boys kicking books that looked like Bibles into the fire, and you never interfered?—I did."

Mr. Wallace evidently rather wished to collect evidence that Father Petcherine had directed a crime to be committed than to interfere to prevent that crime. He consented to stand by and witness a Bible being burnt, in order to have an opportunity of bringing "great disrespect, discredit, and dishonour" on the Catholic religion. If Father Petcherine's supposed act was a crime, is Mr. Wallace, by his own confession, innocent of the very same crime?

Another of these gentry is Mr. William S. Darking, who followed the barrows because he heard there was to be a Bible-burning; who took up a Bible from the barrow to identify it, and then put it down again, without a thought of saving what he pretended to consider a holy thing from the chance of desecration; he never spoke to Father Petcherine about it, to prevent the act, but only to the policeman, in order to implicate some one after the act was done. This is, with his ideas, about as innocent as it would be for an eye-witness to allow A to consummate the murder of B, in order that he, the witness, might have the pleasure of hanging A afterwards. This person appears to have consented beforehand to the Bible-burning, in order to entrap Father Petcherine, and to bring "disrespect, discredit, and dishonour" on the Catholic religion.

These very conscientious reverers of the Word of God can pass by Holyoake's shop in Fleet Street, where every publication in the window throws scorn and ridicule on the truth of the Bible; they tolerate Professor Newman, author of some of the most subtle of these books, as a professor at their university, and a teacher of their youth; they bear it with great equanimity if their children bring home lollipops folded in Bible-leaves, or if the sacred paper wraps the butter that the grocer sends to their wives;—it is only when these books, after having been the instruments of insult to Catholics, are by Catholics treated as Protestants have universally treated our symbols and holy things, our crosses, our pixes, and things still holier,—that their blood is up, and they think it necessary to put their law (a Catholic law, originally intended only to protect Catholic holy things) into force and action. Thank

God, they failed; and they failed on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, which is another consolation.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Pontydwlm, Dec. 11, 1855.

R. AP W.

CROWN COURT AND THE AUSTRIAN CONCORDAT.

To the Editor of the Rambler.

SIR,—Gaiety and gravity are strangely mingled in this world. And if there was no next world, which I understand is a pious opinion in some Protestant circles, and probably to be made a matter of faith when they get a pope of their own, gaiety would considerably predominate in the mind of any human being who looked on at the present absurdities blazing in the Protestant sky. There really is some apology due to the readers of the *Rambler* for saying something, or any thing, about the matter which I am going to take in hand. But I will do it historically, and begin, with Horace, from the egg.

Now the egg was Presbyterianism, and the hatcher was Calvin, and the nest was Geneva. And the incubation, and the progeny, and the results, may best be described in the elementary manner of the rhythmical and rhyming poem which delighted our childhood in relating the building of the house of Jack. I shall not fatigue your readers, or perhaps, I should rather say, not cloy them, with the repetition of the ancient rhythm, but put the whole in one string.

This is the city of Jack the bald, Now and ever Geneva called. And this is Jack the bald, you see, Who burnt Servetus for heresy. And this is the egg which Jack kept warm, Intending, of course, no possible harm. And this is the Kirk that came out of the shell, And chirped so loud, as we know full well. And this is Scotland, to which it came over, Where a good many years it lived in clover. And this is Crown Court, as you shall see, With a minister prim and starch of ble. Who sometimes wears a Geneva gown, And sometimes what is not his own. So here, in a very few words, you are told Of schism and heresy new and old. And the wonderful house in London town, That Jack has built to save the Crown.

I humbly submit, that this is a tolerable epitome, upon which some future veracious historian of the Kirk or Kirks of Scotland may pin something. Erasmus, we are told, used to laugh to tears when he heard the vagaries and the marriages

of the miserable unfrocked swillers who drank with Luther, and like him. We, it is true, live in an age of toast-and-water; but we think we could furnish Erasmus, first of all, with materials for his laughter exceeding those of his own time, and then dash his mirth by spectacles which he certainly did not anticipate in the midst of his derision. Now the gentleman who calls himself Doctor Cumming and preaches in Crown Court, where I suppose he finds a certain number like himself to hear him, has, by dint of most inexorable puffing, and by a great fertility of publishing books bound in blue, and at first printed with close lines, but latterly with the lines very much widened,—by these harmless artifices he has got himself into such a position as probably no Kirker ever occupied in London before. He has actually succeeded in getting himself noticed and answered by gentlemen. If any thing occurs in England, or even in Europe, adverse to the variolous religions chronicled by Mr. Horace Mann, a letter, signed “John Cumming,” appears, probably next day, in the *Times*. These letters are characterised by the sort of learning which we are justified in expecting from the discoverer and peruser of the works of Vigilantius. They have also another quality. They are not such as controversialists of another sort of learning are apt to write in relation to serious matters, and in correspondence with gentlemen and scholars. Who complains of this? No one. It pleases, we suppose, Kirkers and their friends; and certainly does not in the least damage that only true and respectable cause with which all the names in Mr. Horace Mann’s paper-basket, except one name, are at war.

Now, the other day the Emperor of Austria effected what has been the desire of Christendom, and therefore not of Crown Court,—a Concordat with the Vicar of Jesus Christ, effectually destroying those fetters which an Antichristian policy had imposed upon the Church in Austria. Kirkdom is immediately refreshed by a letter in the *Times* from Dr. Cumming, so to call him, making remarks upon the sermon delivered by his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman on the subject. Mr. Bowyer, really a gentleman and scholar, and a jurist of reputation, replies to this letter in the *Times* with the utmost courtesy. And the correspondence extends to two or three letters on each side. The *Times*, which allows the utmost latitude of abuse and calumny to Dr. Cumming and itself against the Catholic Church all over the world, will not allow Kirkers to be handled roughly in its columns. Let any Catholic take the alternative offered in Holy Scripture, and send a letter to that paper answering a fool according to his folly,—

no one will ever see it. But Mr. Bowyer having disposed of Dr. Cumming's follies in his pleasant and scholarlike letters, you will perhaps allow me, who really have quite a devotion to Dr. Cumming, and enjoy a morning with him—on paper—above most other treats, to offer to that gentleman some few considerations for him and his Kirk arising out of his recent letters.

Dr. Cumming says, that Protestants are agreed in all but discipline. Very well. Some twelve years ago the Kirk of Scotland was one. Then they fell out; and one morning the Kirk split into two. It is well remembered by every body who troubled himself to read any of the tiresome and stupid details of that affair, that the only lively thing in the whole proceeding was the fierce denunciations of the new or free Kirkers against the old or established Kirkers, of whom Dr. Cumming is one. Now these denunciations were not conceived in the least in a spirit of brotherly love. But these denunciations, which used to appear, if we recollect rightly, in a paper called the *Witness*, and elsewhere, went to the length of threatening the spiritual welfare of those who presumed to remain Kirkers of the old sort. This is something beyond differing about discipline, and may account for Dr. Cumming's mentioning no Free Kirk name, not even CANDLISH, when he gave to St. Peter so fragrant a posy of friends.

There is, too, a document, called the Solemn League and Covenant, in which we find that the noblemen, barons, ministers of the gospel, and commons of all sorts, make the following pleasant declaration: That they will "endeavour the extirpation not only of Popery but of Prelacy (that is, Church-government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, and all other ecclesiastical offices depending on that hierarchy)." Now, I humbly submit, that this being directed against the Established Church of England, goes a good deal beyond a question of discipline. For it is a question of doctrine in what way Almighty God determined that His Church should be governed and taught. And it is distinctly laid down in the same book which contains the Solemn League and Covenant, under the head of "The Form of Church-government," that the government of the Church of Christ is Presbyterian. This is doctrine. On the other hand, the Established Church in England distinctly says that bishops, priests, and deacons are the evident constitution of the Church in Scripture and antiquity; and, in her canon of 1603, anathematises most powerfully any body besides itself setting up—like the people in Crown Court, for instance—to be a Church of Christ within this kingdom. I have lying before

me two editions of these Kirk formularies, identical in all respects,—one printed in 1836, the other in 1845; the Anglican Prayer-book is reprinted every year; so the mutual compliments are kept up in all their freshness. I hope Dr. Cumming will not forget this when he writes another little book and calls it another “New-year’s Compliment.” But how have these dear friends verified these compliments in times past? Is it necessary to tell the tedious old story over again; how the Common Prayer was brayed out of Scotland, and how the Kirkers, in 1641 and the years following, turned out bishops, in obedience to the Solemn League and Covenant, suppressed the Common Prayer, lampooned it as “porridge,” and occupied the benefices of the Established ministers, till the Independents, in their turn, ousted them, and found the usual facility, as the Kirkers had done before, of adapting themselves to easy circumstances, and what Chalmers has since called the Bowers of an establishment? No. Other people know all this as well as Dr. Cumming.

But, to make an end with this gentleman, on what is the existence of his Establishment built at this moment? A successful outbreak, according to the League and Covenant, against Episcopacy. The Kirkers in Scotland of the old sort now occupy the buildings, and have the money, which the Episcopalians had taken from us. And the Free Kirkers, who could not take these things from the old Kirkers, formed themselves into a new Kirk, on the express ground of the Erastianism of the old Kirkers in permitting lay persons, her Majesty among the number, to nominate to Kirk parishes. I leave the contemplation of this happy family, not only to Dr. Cumming, who knows all about it, but to the impartial public, who will know more about it before it has done with these Kirks. When Dr. Cumming most impudently and falsely speaks, therefore, of the “disloyalty” of Cardinal Wiseman, we beg him to recollect two things—not the least as a favour to ourselves. The first is this, that if the Cardinal were disloyal, as he is not, being in all temporal things most truly the subject of the Crown, he would have in the history of Dr. Cumming’s Kirk the most ample precedent for disloyalty. Never from any pen have there fallen denunciations so fierce and scandalous of the Anglican Establishment as from the Presbyterian party. Never was victory over Church and State so complete as that achieved by the Presbyterian outburst under Charles I. The Independents completed the work; but the Establishment and the King were already prostrate before the Presbyterians. The Cardinal Archbishop claims and exercises freedom for the Catholic Church in this country. Dr.

Cumming's Kirk claimed and obtained not only freedom for itself, but the destruction of all other Protestantism.

The second thing is this: he always talks of "Dr. Wiseman." It is, we need hardly say, matter of real indifference how he speaks of any prelate, or, indeed, of any Christian. But he should recollect, solely for his own sake, that when speaking of the Cardinal Archbishop, who is recognised as such in every part of Christendom and every quarter of the globe, if he, with designed impertinence, describes that illustrious personage as "Dr. Wiseman," people are forced to inquire, by the most natural process of mind, who and what is Dr. Cumming? Now, as we have hinted before, we call him Doctor, not because he is doctor, but because he calls himself so. He certainly is not Doctor of Divinity. That is a degree of Christianity conferred upon members of the Christian and Catholic Church. To ascribe it to a man who is simply nothing, is, on our part, a mere act of social courtesy; for this gentleman, who calls himself "Doctor" Cumming, does it in virtue of his also calling himself Reverend, which is also a title to the various degrees of the sacred ministry of God. Now Dr. Cumming has none of these: he is not a minister of God. He has never received any orders at all, and is merely an heretical layman. Let him, then, for his own sake, recollect that he lives in a house of glass; and that nothing would be easier, if people were so minded, than to withdraw from him all the titles with which he glorifies himself. He knows very well that not only Catholics, but also the immense body of learned and anti-Calvinistic Anglicans, hold his absurd pretensions and absurd ministry in as great contempt as we do. We hope he will take these little admonitions in good part, and recollect them when he takes his pen in hand again. He is "affectionately invited to attend" to them.

D.

Review.

BROWNING'S MEN AND WOMEN.

Men and Women. By Robert Browning. Chapman and Hall.

IN an article on Mr. Bailey's *Festus*, in the *Rambler* of last month, we explained how it was that the modern poet cannot act the part of the ancient *vates*, nor aspire to be the channel of communication between God and man. If he teaches truth, he must in religious matters be the mere interpreter of the

Church, the rhymers of her dogmas, the musician who adapts her words and thoughts to the requirements of the popular ear, or the powers of the popular tongue; while in subjects of science and learning he must follow the decisions of the philosopher and the scholar. If he does not do this, he becomes a mere impostor, like Joe Smith, and an antiquarian restorer of dead opinions which he does not believe himself, or a frigid imitator of the antique, like Mr. Bailey. But though we thus denied the prophetic office of the modern poet, we certainly never thought of refusing him spacious territories for the exercise of his calling; indeed we think that we should be on the whole much more liberal than modern critics in general in estimating the subjects about which a poet may write. We cannot see why, if Dante, with his cantos upon cantos of St. Thomas in *terza rima*,—if Milton, with his versified treatises on theology,—if Shakespeare, with his subtle analyses and deep philosophies,—are to be reckoned poets, we are to make it a ground of objection to the modern singer that he turns into rhyme “the pleadings of a casuist, the arguments of a critic, or the ponderous discourses of some obsolete schoolman.” Nor, again, if the choruses of Æschylus, or the odes of Pindar, are poetry; or, to come down to modern days, if Keble’s *Sunday Puzzle* deserves its popularity and its fortieth edition or so,—can we say, *a priori*, that obscurity and true poetry are incompatible. If the poet is to be allowed to write on obscure subjects, he must be allowed to write obscurely; if he is to state the enigma of life, we must be content to let an enigma remain an enigma. Not that we defend the practice of veiling what in itself is clear enough in the mists of verbiage, or of enclosing a whim in a shell of triple brass, that first breaks your teeth in the cracking, and then ruffles your temper when you find only a maggot inside.

In this we do but say, that “thought’s what we mean by verse, and seek in verse;” poetry of a high order must give us reason, not merely melody. Not that we seek reason in poetry as we seek it in a treatise on the differential calculus, in Tredgold on the steam-engine, or in somebody else on predestination; we don’t want lists of things added to things, like Horace Mann’s statistics; or words added to words, like a blarney of Dr. Cumming’s; but we want the thoughts and the visions of a man who knows what things mean, who can read the sermons in stones, and listen to the words that “plants can speak;” and can report to us, or rather can set before us, the stones and the plants in such a way that with our own eyes we can read their sermons, and with our own ears hear the remarks of the daisy and the buttercup. True, a great many

sawneys ramble out into fields, and pluck you a toadstool or a mangel-wurzel, and straightway set it up as a fetish, and display their agility in their uncouth worship; many more, too, will assure you that they read in the gills of the mushroom, or the flakes of the onion, "thoughts too deep for tears," much more for words. But, of course, the failures of the small fry never prove that the great fishes cannot leap up the fall. There are voices to be gathered from the trees and the rocks and the stars (especially the moon), though we do not trust every spoony that professes to have jotted them down on the spot into his note-book.

What is true, in a measure, with respect to the lifeless objects of nature, is most true with regard to man. To exhibit man such as he is, in his doubts, his trials, his affections, his fortunes and misfortunes; to exhibit character; to relate histories which, though individual, are, like algebraic formulas, of universal application, so that, after the poet has once expressed the type, we know exactly what is meant when a man is called an Iago, or a Hamlet, or a Hector, or a Maw-worm, or a Bottom,—this is the real drama, the true epos. Man, as living for realities, man as destined to be and to do something more than to get married to a beautiful girl, and then to be snuffed out,—such as our fashionable novels represent him,—is the object of the poet who is really a poet. As man in real life puzzles his head and breaks his heart over mysteries which he cannot solve, who shall forbid the poet from expressing these mysteries? and who shall complain if they are only expressed, not solved? For our poet is only a poet, a painter, a representer; not a *vates*, or solver of mysteries. It is very fine for Smith to like nothing but ballads—easy songs, in which a simple fact is simply narrated, or Jones to admire no poetry but that of the affections. It is an old complaint, that some men's fancies never change, but make all people do and say the same things in the selfsame way; but there are more things in the universe of poetry than such people's philosophy dreams of.

It is almost necessary to introduce a review of Mr. Browning's late volumes by some remarks of this sort, because people with eyes only on one side of their heads (like flat-fish), and hearts all ventricle, or all auricle, have bitterly complained that a poet of his richness of fancy, his wonderful facility of expression, and, let us add, powerful intellect, has turned away from themes and from melodies which touch all hearts, to these more recondite, but, after all, deeper and more difficult phases of life and thought. That Mr. Browning has aimed at this highest sphere of poetry is evident by the title he gives his poems: he calls them "men and women,"—not

sticks and stones, not small celandines and daisies, storm and stress, sunbeams, shadows, or night-sides of nature. He evidently wishes to make his Cleons, Norberts, Lippos, and Andreas types of character, and to exhibit the subtle workings of particular temperaments in instances that shall have the value of general formulæ. Whether he has succeeded, and how far, of course requires a detailed examination.

Perhaps one of the first things that strikes a person in turning over the leaves of these volumes is a certain Hudibrastic recklessness of thought and diction; a higgledy-piggledy mixture of the grand rage of Lear, the sly wisdom of the fool, and the maniac ravings of mad Tom. Allied to this, the reader will also discover a keen enjoyment of dirt as such, a poking of the nose into dunghills and the refuse of hospitals, into beggars' wallets and into Jews' old-clo' bags, accompanied by the peculiar grunt which expresses not only the pleasure experienced, but also the nature of the experiencer. What animal but a pig could find delight in such accumulations and similes, as "grass growing scant as hair in leprosy on mud kneaded up with blood;" "the leanness of the soil breaking out into substances like boils;" "a cleft in the palsied oak like a distorted mouth that splits its rim;" or the opening of "Holy Cross Day," a ballad of Jews driven to church to hear the annual Christian sermon:

"Fee, faw, fum! bubble and squeak!
Blessedest Thursday's the fat of the weak.
Rumble and tumble, sleek and rough,
Stinking and savoury, smug and gruff,
Take the church-road, for the bell's due chime
Gives us the summons—'tis sermon-time.

* * * * *

Higgledy-piggledy, packed we lie,
Rats in a hamper, swine in a sty,
Wasps in a bottle, frogs in a sieve,
Worms in a carcass, fleas in a sleeve.
Hist! square shoulders, settle your thumbs,
And buzz for the bishop—here he comes."

Here is a real Hogarth-like picture of the frowzy saturnalia of the votaries of the nauseous mythological triad, Old Clo', Cloaca, and Cloacina. There is another ballad of the burning of a heretic, equally greasy, grimy, and grim. In fact, abundant evidence might be produced that in one phase at least of his character our poet is, so to say, a Saxon swine. But this phase of his powers may only serve to enhance other sides of his character; the fooleries of mad Tom unquestionably act as a foil to the imprecations of Lear. And it may be that the poet gives evidence of other faculties besides mere power,

when he can wave one hand in the pure regions of the ether above the mountain-tops, and with the other grub for offal among the mud of a duck-pond. It often happens that the strong well-developed man, animal as he must be, must also, *quà* animal, have one side related to animality, to uncouthness, and to dirt, however much, from motives of cleanliness, or in obedience to the laws of refined society, he curbs his inclination. Any how, the laws of society permitting it, the world in general finds no fault with such sallies. The most fastidious Protestant can accept the grotesque buffoonery and grosser blackguardism of Luther, and only think him a grander and stronger man for it. Who blames Shakespeare for Falstaff? and why refuse to acknowledge Robert Browning's right to disport himself in the same regions? If the style of thing was wrong, by all means condemn it in Shakespeare, and in better men than he; but if it is only contrary to present etiquette, it is mere conventionalism and dandification to turn up your nose at it. It is well to be a gentleman; but if you push the thing too far, you may become a gentleman-heretic, a fellow who would renounce the Trinity if he saw vermin creeping upon the skirt of St. Athanasius.

Of course, "there be roses and roses;" we are not excusing that which offends against morals; only that which, though it may offend prudery, does not shock modesty. However, there is really no occasion to defend Mr. Browning so seriously; his critics have only accused him of the faults of an ancient artist, by whose martyrdoms in a picture-gallery one passes shuddering, though their reality and the brightness of their colouring forbid all thought of their expulsion. Mr. Browning's fancy is rather ghastly than unctuously coarse. Every thing reminds him of blood; the mire is kneaded up with it; the crimson on the creeper's leaf in autumn is like a splash of it on a golden shield—

"The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood:"

the lightning darts forth from heaven and in again; where it breaks the roof, there are shed, "bloodlike, some few drops of rain." But we must apply ourselves to a more detailed account of the contents of these two volumes.

Mr. Browning, it is notorious, is a dramatic writer; his real vocation is to the drama; and the contents of these volumes seem to us to be meritorious in direct ratio to their dramatic form or intention. One of the best things is a sketch in three parts, entitled "In a Balcony." There are but three persons concerned: Norbert a minister of state; the Queen;

and Constance, her niece. In the first part Norbert declares his love for Constance, and prevails on her to let him speak to the Queen. In the second the Queen, who has mistaken Norbert's diplomatic talk for a declaration of love to herself, comes and talks in the fulness of her joy to Constance, who is, of course, unable to comprehend her meaning. In the third, Norbert enters and explains himself; the Queen withdraws; and the sketch ends with the approach of the guards. The intimate knowledge, the delicacy and the subtlety with which the devotion of Constance and Norbert, and the fiery and illicit love of the old Queen, are expressed, bespeak dramatic power of a very high order. There is also a ballad entitled "*The Light Woman*," in which a plot, disagreeable enough, it is true, but natural and probable, and leading to seemingly inextricable difficulties, is admirably sketched out.

But the poems that have had the most attraction for us form a series on the different phases of artist-life, and the comparison of it with that of the unartistic portion of mankind. Most of these pieces have a dramatic character, though only one person speaks, who is the representative of some one type of artist-life. Together these poems may be said to form, not a philosophy of art, but a philosophy of artists.

First comes the school of flesh. The representative of this class is Fra Lippo Lippi, the profligate friar, who being caught by the guard of Florence in a disreputable neighbourhood after midnight, defends himself in a long speech, in which he describes his life,—how he became a monk, and how he has been attracted to the school of art which he followed, or rather founded. He is a type of the rollicking student, frequenting dens of vice, and yet, in the midst of danger and disgrace, having his eyes open for every piece of nature, sketching off on his thumb-nail the face of the policeman who collars him, to be immortalised in a picture as the slave who holds "*John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair*," boasting of his being under the protection of the Medici, the people of the great house at the corner, and finally making friends with the guard, and entertaining them with his chat till day-break. The picture is admirably put before our eyes; the painter's life is sketched from the time that he was left a mere child to starve in the streets, where he lived

“ ——— God knows how, a year or two
On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds, and shucks,
Refuse and rubbish—”

till he is found by his aunt in a state of collapse, and dragged straight to the convent, where he gets a bit of bread, and a vocation, such as it is:

“ While I stood munching my first bread that month,
 ‘ So, boy, you’re minded,’ quoth the good fat father,
 Wiping his own mouth (’twas refection-time)
 ‘ To quit this very miserable world?
 Will you renounce?’ The mouthful of bread? thought I.
 By no means! Brief, they made a monk of me.”

And all the world knows what kind of monk he turned out. In the streets, he says, as a beggar, he had not watched folks’ faces in vain; he came to know by intuition who would fling him a bit of biscuit, or would only kick him; he had learnt the look of things, he knew what faces and limbs meant, and he painted them; he could not endure to paint soul by painting the body so ill that the eye could not stop there; his principle was, that if you paint nature, soul *must* shine through. The use of art is to reproduce nature, which we pass by without notice till the artist arrests our attention by his imitation. This, he says, is to get into the pulpit, and to interpret God to the people. Mere symbolism is no element of art; there is no need of art for your skull and cross-bones, your two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or your triangle. So the profligate rollicking monk inaugurates the school of flesh and limbs; copy whatever flesh you see; expression and soul will be sure to be there.

The next in our series is an epistle from a travelling Arab physician of the time of Tiberius, who comes to Jerusalem, and there examines the case of a madman named Lazarus, labouring under the delusion that he had been dead and had been raised from the grave. Mr. Browning *obiter* takes the occasion of painting what he conceives to be the tenets and the conduct of the primitive Christians: thus Lazarus never attempted to convert his neighbours, never to

“ Make proselytes as madmen thirst to do.
 How can he give his neighbour the real ground,
 His own conviction?”

He answers every objection with the same words: “ Be it as God please.” The point, however, of the poem, which is very dramatically wrought up, is the cool indifference of the man of science in the presence of Christianity. Lazarus has told the physician of the Incarnation; he is quite ashamed of mentioning such a trivial subject when he has such important communications to make as the discovery of a bed of burrage, of a new symptom in fevers, or of a new charm. Yet the words of Lazarus force themselves upon his remembrance; and after closing the letter, he adds as a kind of postscript the following sublime lines:

"The very God! think, Ahib; dost thou think?
 So, the All-Great were the All-Loving too—
 So, through the thunder comes a human voice,
 Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
 Face, My hands fashioned, see it in Myself.
 Thou hast no power, nor mayst conceive of Mine;
 But love I gave thee, and Myself to love,
 And thou must love Me, who have died for thee!
 The madman saith He said so: it is strange."

The next in the series, entitled "How it strikes a Contemporary," is a sketch of the external life of the poet—say of Cervantes wandering about a Spanish town. And the next, impertinent and satirical as it is, and probably supposed by ninety-nine readers out of a hundred to be a squib on Cardinal Wiseman, is still, to our minds, one of the same series. It is a most subtle comparison between, on the one hand, the lowest grade of artistic life,—that of the literary hack and monthly scribbler for *Blackwood's Magazine*, who "believes he sees two points in Hamlet's soul unseized by the Germans yet—which view he'll print;" but yet lives an artistic life in so far as he strives to reap all his enjoyment from the action of his "imperious necessity of creating" such things as he can; and on the other hand, such a man as Bishop Blougram is a type of the unartistic life,—a man who can enjoy art and artistic creation, but who, whenever these things come into competition with the least enjoyment, with the smallest convenience, at once sacrifices art, and all that elegance, seemliness, and truthfulness, which, in theory at least, the artistic mind requires for its very being. Of such a life there are many degrees, from that of the hard-handed mechanic up to the fat and pampered sinecurist who eats tithe-pigs and flourishes on the fears and superstitions of his neighbours. Of course the most unpleasant specimen of such a man would be the half-sceptical prelate, who sucks means of luxury out of a system the truth of which he does not—cannot believe. The Catholic would, perhaps, pick out an Anglican bishop for an example of this class of persons; he must not, then, be too hard upon the Protestant poet for choosing a Catholic to exemplify his position. At the same time, it is scandalous in Mr. Browning *first* to show so plainly *whom* he means, when he describes an English Catholic bishop, once bishop *in partibus*, now a member of "our novel hierarchy," one who "plays the part of Pandulph," one too, who, though an Englishman, was born in a foreign land; and *then* to go on sketching a fancy portrait which is abominably untrue, and to draw this person not only as an arch-hypocrite, but also as the frankest of fools. It is bad enough to assign a heap of disgusting qualities to a Ca-

tholic bishop in the abstract,—though Catholics are too much accustomed to such impertinence to have their equanimity grievously disturbed; but it is far worse to attribute the hypocrisy and scepticism that he has forged in his own brain to any person whom he designates so plainly.

To return, however, to the class of persons of whom Bishop Blougram is a type; those who smack their lips over the good things of the world; who have a keen relish for fame, honours, comfort, cookery, and so forth; who are by no means indifferent to religion, but (like Dr. Binney) have well settled it in their minds that a man can enjoy both this world and the next; men of strong will, who have faith because they *choose* to believe, and choose to believe because they have weighed the consequences of believing or not believing on their comfort both here and hereafter;—such a man is put forward as the champion of the practical, unpoetical, unartistic life,—against “Gigadibs, the literary man,” the dreamy, uncertain, sceptical half-artist, who in the voyage of life would fain furnish his six-feet-by-four of cabin with a grand pianoforte and a picture by Guido. “Bishop Blougram’s Apology,” though utterly mistaken in the very groundwork of religion, though starting from the most unworthy notions of the work of a Catholic bishop, and defending a self-indulgence which every honest man must feel to be disgraceful, is yet in its way triumphant. If Gigadibs is not converted so as to wish to be a bishop, at any rate he goes to Australia with a treble set of settler’s implements; he deserts the artist-life, moved by the arguments of the ant-artist.

Will you believe or disbelieve? says Blougram. Men’s minds are full of uncertainty, full of suspicions, which push them now one way, now another. Shall we throw overboard all certainty because we doubt; or throw over our doubt, and act as if we were certain? One way we must decide before we can act, for action requires decision. Which side shall we adopt? shall we call our chequered soul white or black? It will *be* what we call it, what we choose it to be. Act as an infidel, and you are an infidel, in spite of your occasional remorse and religiosity; act on faith, and you are faithful, in spite of your doubts. Choose your side, and you are already that which you wish to be—

“If you desire faith, you’ve faith enough.”

All this and more Blougram urges with a fertility of illustration and felicity of argument that (in spite of the miserable shortcoming of his principle) is quite delightful. Who, after reading his apology twice, or thrice perhaps, will object to ar-

gument in poetry? Why, the very first use of poetry was to instruct: he who has to weigh and measure his words to force them into shape, to compress his meaning, and to find out all possible ways of expressing it, if he has average brains will, after all this trouble, say what he has to say in a more striking, a more pertinent, a more memorable way than the man who blurts forth his extempore thoughts in the first words and the loosest order, just as they happen to arrive. But there is a kind of argument which belongs peculiarly to poetry: it is the argument of induction in its widest sense; it is the bringing things forward, and making them speak their own language and utter their own meanings. Its process is the process of nature. Children look at each thing that strikes their eye, and from each gain ideas by some inexplicable process. The poet notices the things that impress him; he describes them, or rather the striking parts of them; and his description makes the same impression on sympathetic minds that the original things did on his own. All our ideas are gained poetically; by the poetry of things, or the poetry of words. Philosophy comes after poetry. The revelation of God comes not as the *Summa* of St. Thomas, much less as the *Elements* of Euclid; but in the odes of Isaias, in the parables of the Gospel, in the lyrical mysteriousness of the Apocalypse. We cannot philosophise till we have prepared ideas to philosophise upon. Where there are no ideas, all teaching must be poetical,—a preparation for ideas. Terms must be defined and understood before they can be argued upon. Where there are no ideas, where the very first principles are in question, it is not discourse of reason that is wanted, but simple apprehension. Hence, perhaps, the Englishman's notorious dislike to cut-and-dry arguments. What is the use of saying, "because *this*, therefore *that*," when he is not certain what *this* and *that* mean? Hence, too, the line of argument which you will hear in the pulpits under which he sits. Take the questions at present in dispute: the authority of the Church, baptismal regeneration, preaching in surplice, stone-altars, credence-tables, crosses, hangings, candlesticks, rood-screens, new bishoprics, restoration of minor orders in Bible-readers, parish-clerks, and schoolmasters. If you go into a prim Gothic church, perhaps you will find the Bishop of Bullocksford in the pulpit advocating all these things in a lump; and the way he does it is sure to be by simile. He begins with an elaborate description, say of an oak-tree, its roots, trunk, branches, leaves, acorns, and oak-apples; then he treats you to the application: by the root he proves stone-altars; by the boughs, branch churches; by the leaves, screens and various

hangings, and so forth: for every thing that requires proof, let us return, he says, to the oak; like the oracular tree of Dodona, it has a response for every question; and his audience goes away delighted, perfectly unconscious that no argument has been used, that the preacher has simply been labouring to instil first ideas.

Then go into the square brick chapel-of-ease over the way, and listen to the Archbishop of Sheepsbeth holding forth on the same subject. You will get no more argument from him; still similes; he perhaps will bring in leviathan, and show triumphantly that stone-altars, crosses, credence-tables and hangings, are all and severally "very like a whale." Parties run high; the case is brought before the supreme tribunals to be decided; Dr. Liquoringham, in his judgment, goes on the lawyer's ground: he has not to discuss poetry, or analogies, or first principles; he must go simply by law. With bloodless logic he weighs allusions to acts of parliament that say nothing on the subject; to homilies which don't exist; and to other equally grave authorities. He weighs the practice of college-chapels and cathedrals; and after months of incubation, delivers a trimming decision, consigns stone-altars, crosses, parafonts, and credence-tables to the fishes; but decides that candlesticks may still, like oaks if you please, stick in their places, and that the rood-screen (shortened by the rood) may still stand root-fast.

Both sides appeal; they wanted the first principles made clear,—they did not want a laborious balancing of authorities for which they do not care a straw. The argument of the lawyer carries no conviction. Both parties retire to their own lists, to fight it out as before with similes, with analogies, with figures,—in a word, with the whole furniture of the poet; because it is about the very first conception of religion, of worship, and of God, that the quarrel really is. Protestants only differ in discipline, says Dr. Cumming; you may say with more truth they differ about the very God they worship. They are still disputing about the very first idea of worship, and this must come to them by the poetical method.

We quote the following lines from Bishop Blougram as an illustration of the path of faith being clear on the whole, in spite of difficulties in detail:

——— "That way
Over the mountain, which who stands upon
Is apt to doubt if it's indeed a road;
While if he views it from the waste itself,
Up goes the line there, plain from base to brow,
Not vague, mistakeable! what's a break or two

Seen from the unbroken desert either side?
And then (to bring in fresh philosophy)
What if the breaks themselves should prove at last
The most consummate of contrivances
To train a man's eye, teach him what is faith?"

The next of the series, "Andrea del Sarto," and the last, "One Word more," relate to the influence of woman on the artist.

Andrea was blessed with a fidgety wife, whose only use was to lend her beautiful face to be copied for Madonnas; but who had no mind to appreciate her husband's talents, and no heart to respond to his devotion. She was too weak to bear her husband's absence; but recalled him to her side from the most lucrative engagements, even when he had been paid beforehand for his works; she impoverished him too by her love of finery, and by paying the gambling debts of disreputable relations. In this charming poem Andrea, at his window with his wife one evening, gently tells her what he is, and what he might have been, if her sympathy had been with him:

——— "Had you but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth then urged
'God and the glory! never care for gain'—
I might have done it for you. So it seems—
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Besides, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not."

In the last piece he tells his wife, to whom he dedicates his "men and women," what wings the true sympathetic woman adds to the artist's flight: how for an enthusiastic love the artist goes beyond his own art: how Rafael writes a volume of sonnets for his love, and Dante paints an angel for Beatrice:

"What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
This: no artist lives and loves that longs not
Once, and only once, and for one only,
(Ah the prize!) to find his love a language
Fit and fair, and simple and sufficient;
Using nature that's an art to others;
Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature.
Ay, of all the artists living, loving,
None but would forego his proper dowry.
Does he paint? he fain would write a poem;
Does he write? he fain would paint a picture;
Put to proof art alien from the artist's,
Once, and only once, and for one only.
So to be the man, and leave the artist,
Save the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow."

The remaining poem of the series is entitled "Cleon:" it

is an epistle from an artist to an emperor, answering several questions that have been put to him, the last of which involved a querulous preference of the immortality of the artist to the temporary greatness of the sovereign. To this Cleon answers :

——“Thou diest while I survive?
Say rather that my fate is deadlier still,
In this, that every day my sense of joy
Grows more acute, my soul (intensified
In power and insight) more enlarged, more keen;
While every day my hairs fall more and more,
My hand shakes, and the heavy years increase;
The horror quickening still from year to year,
The consummation coming past escape,
When I shall know most, and yet least enjoy;
When all my works wherein I prove my worth
Being present still to mock me in men's mouths,
Alive still, in the phrase of such as thou,
I, I, the feeling, thinking, acting man,
The man who loved his life so over much,
Shall sleep in my urn.”

At the end of the epistle he tells the emperor that he does not know where to find Paulus (the apostle), to whom a letter was to be forwarded, evidently to get answers to the same questions. The philosopher gently rebukes the monarch :

“Thou can'st not think a mere barbarian Jew
Hath access to a secret shut from us.”

The artist, no more than the king, has the secret of happiness; yet, in the pride of art, he will not seek it outside the domain of pure art. Art is not all we want; yet it ought to be; so we will have nothing else. As Browning sings in one of his lyrics, addressing the poet,

“You hold things beautiful the best
'Tis something—nay, 'tis much; but then
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you poor, sick, old ere your time,
Nearer one whit your own sublime
Than we who never turned a rhyme?”

Our poet, it will be seen, does not exhaust his philosophy in his blank verse; his lyrics are full of it. In the poem “Old Pictures in Florence,” so outrageously dishevelled in rhyme and language, we have an excellent comparison of the spirit of Greek with that of Christian art. In another, “Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha,” we have an inimitable description of one of Bach's fugues. The attempt to put the more undefined music of Galuppi into words is not so successful; while in the poem entitled “Saul,” in which David is the speaker,

who relates what he sung to the possessed king, we have the various stages of Mr. Browning's religious theory.

David, called in to awake the monarch from his trance, first plays him all the tunes he can think of; then sings to him of "the wild joys of living:"

"How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy!"

Then he turns away from this merely animal life, and sings of the human objects of existence—fame and glory. But as yet Saul rises not; David, looking at him, feels the thrill of love, and sings to him that he is ready to die for him to restore him to his former self. Then comes the inspiration; the prophet flings away his harp, and sings of the love of God:

"Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? here, the parts shift?
Here, the creature surpass the Creator? the end, what Began?
Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man,
And dare doubt He alone shall not help him, who yet alone can?
Would it ever have entered my mind, the bare will, much less power,
To bestow on this Saul what I sang of, the marvellous dower,
Of the life he was gifted and filled with? to make such a soul,
Such a body, and then such an earth for ensphering the whole?
And doth it not enter my mind (as my warm tears attest)
These good things being given, to go on, and give one more, the best?
Ay, to save and redeem, and restore him?"

Then he goes on; it is not in knowledge or in power that man is an image of his Creator; it is in his will:

"'Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do."

From this David can only draw one conclusion:

"Would I suffer for him that I love? So wilt Thou, so wilt Thou!
So shall crown Thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown,
And Thy love fill infinitude wholly. . . .
He who did most shall bear most; the strongest shall stand the most
weak.

'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for! my flesh that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek it and find it. O Saul, it shall be,
A Face like my face that receives thee: a Man like to me
Thou shalt love and be loved by for ever! a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand."

Oh, the misery, that a poet with a soul like this, naturally Christian, should be held aloof by a spirit of mockery, by the hard artistic scepticism, whose bitterness no one has probed more deeply, no one has described more feelingly than himself! That a man, who has such an affection for the earth of Italy, that

"Woman-country, never wed,
Loved all the more by earth's male lands,"

should always stand in an attitude of suspicion, should always have a sneer on his lips for the Church of Italy,—that true woman-church, which alone will really appreciate his art, derided by sceptical critics; which alone can lend him enthusiasm, and give him a real object, instead of the foolish ends on which he wastes his powers,—ends which he knows to be mere vanity and vexation! When one sees how much Mr. Browning must have thought and reflected, and how near he comes to Christianity, one wonders why he has stopped, why he is not a Catholic. As it is, he is held in the trammels of the modern school of Protestants that denies hell; that thinks all men will come right at last; that holds it to be better to do something than nothing,—to do wrong, rather than to idle all day long, because the business of the soul is simply to declare itself by its action, by its fruit:

“ Be hate that fruit, or love that fruit,
It forwards the general deed of man;
And each of the many helps to recruit
The life of the race by a general plan,
Each living his own, to boot.”

A crime, he says, will do as well to serve for a test as a virtue. Do your best, whether winning or losing, if you choose to play:

“ Let a man contend to the uttermost
For his life's set prize, be what it will.”

Mr. Browning has such a perilous facility of putting himself into the place of the most horrible men, of uttering their thoughts and expressing their feelings, that a religious person reading his works runs great risk of being shocked at each page. The same persons who cried out against Byron for imagining the atrocious blasphemy of Cain and Satan—though if Satan is introduced, it is hardly the thing to make him a respectable and twaddling preacher—will find abundant cause to censure Mr. Browning; he makes no bones of uttering from the housetops that which the decent conventionality of society generally agrees to cover and to forget. He expresses things, of which those who are ignorant had better remain so, but which those who know of them will be glad to find so well expressed, so well prepared for dissection and study. Physicians may study the phenomena of madness in Shakespeare, and divines may examine the difficulties of sceptics or the objections of infidels in Mr. Browning.

From all this it may be understood that our author is not a popular poet. He writes for the few, not for the many. Even those pieces which are most adapted to touch men's hearts are interrupted by too much allusion, alloyed with too much

brain, to run smoothly and trippingly. His lyre is as obscure as that of Æschylus. Sometimes a mere dreamy shadowy fancy is the sole foundation of a little piece; other poems, again, appear to be chiefly exercises of metre and rhyme. No doubt it is a hard task to have to write some dozen stanzas of four lines, each stanza containing only from twenty-four to twenty-six syllables, of which no less than ten are to be rhymes. This feat has been accomplished in the lines "On a Pretty Woman," which gain neither beauty nor sense from the fetters. As a better sample of this hornpipe in chains we quote two stanzas of the little poem entitled "In a Year:"

"Never any more
While I live
Need I hope to see his face
As before.
Once his love grown chill
Mine may strive—
Bitterly we re-embrace,
Single still.

Was it something said,
Something done,
Vexed him? was it touch of hand,
Turn of head?
Strange! that very way
Love begun:
I as little understand
Love's decay."

After all, the capabilities of these kinds of metre were pretty nearly exhausted by our poets of the seventeenth century. Modern poets are not supposed to write "altars" or "wings" like George Herbert, nor even to count their syllables on the ends of their fingers. Modern verses are not read by feet, but by the rules of musical rhythm; not by syllables, but by accents. The lines are to be divided by bars as in music, rather than by the ordinary prosodiocal pauses. The application of the rules of musical rhythm will often solve the problem of an apparently halting verse. Thus, how difficult to read is a kind of metre in frequent use, where a short line immediately follows after and rhymes with a long line; you feel as if you had mistaken the number of steps in a staircase, and had been brought up by a step in the air at the top. If

"Rhyme the rudder is of verses,
By which, like ships, they steer their courses,"

doubtless the rhyme ought to indicate the musical answer to the first musical phrase. But the phrase and its answer should be rhythmically equal. Who does not know the curious effect of displacing the rhymes in the ordinary measure of "eights-

and-sixes" (vide Tate and Brady *passim*), and making the three-foot line rhyme with the four-foot immediately preceding? The ear will never get accustomed to these anomalies till it feels the value of the musical principle of the echo, which allows a rhythm to be broken by the repetition or the imitation of the last few notes of each phrase. If this is the law of the short rhyming line, it seems to follow that, like the musical echo, it should be in sound as well as sense a repetition or imitation, or at least an answer to the concluding measure of the former line. Poems where such a metre is used seem to us to halt when the sense marches forward directly, without a slight pause, or even a slight reflex motion, in every short line. Mr. Browning has two poems in such metres, which seem to us unpleasant for these reasons. We quote a stanza from the first poem of the book:

"Now—the single little turret that remains
 On the plains,
 By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
 Overscored,
 While the patching house-leek's head of blossom winks
 Through the chinks."

The words are beautifully descriptive; but the music is unpleasant. So is that of the piece called "*Instans Tyrannus*," though in this case the style justifies a licentious metre. What effect a master like Mr. Browning may produce by the repetitions and pauses we have mentioned may be seen in his poem entitled "*Mesmerism*," where the fixed intention and the persevering manipulations are so excellently imitated by the iteration of the same words and the same ideas.

But, on the whole, Mr. Browning's lyric power is far inferior to his dramatic vigour. His music is not to be compared with Tennyson's, nor his faculty of making nature sympathise with the character intended to be described. When Tennyson describes his solitary woman in the moated grange, all nature, without effort, is in harmony with the woman's solitude. Browning cannot reduce nature to this sympathy without art and trouble; he has an elaborate poem, "*Childe Roland to the dark tower came*," in which nature is described as it appears to the man riding on a hateful and desperate undertaking; but what he has scarcely done in thirty stanzas Tennyson would have accomplished in ten. Browning also is too energetic to give us always perfectly pleasing images. As he says in his last poem—

"Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also."

He does not give us things as we could wish them to be, but as we know they are and will be. In this he is like Thackeray,

all whose characters have grave blemishes, but such as on reflection we know that they probably would have. Neither writer will submit to give us heart without brain, to give us without alloy that which the affections and sentiments desire. Both throw themselves into a character, and make the character speak, not what we would have it utter, but what they know it would naturally express. Their aim is not abstract beauty, but nature, and the truth of nature. They belong to Fra Lippo Lippi's school of art, not to that of Beato Angelico or of Overbeck—far less to the drawing-room conventionalities of the Chalons and the rest of the artists of *Annals* and *Books of Beauty*. It is one thing for a writer to establish his own ideal of the pathetic or the humorous, and to distort all nature to this mould, as Dickens does, and another, with Browning and Thackeray, to copy nature in the full confidence that, if she is but truly followed, the copy must imply and suggest soul as much as the original—and more definitively and impressively, inasmuch as in the copy a single object is exhibited, disentangled from all others, concentrated in time, and painted on a plain surface, instead of puzzling the eye with the perspective illusions of solid bodies.

For ourselves, we thank Mr. Browning, sceptical and reckless as he is, for a rare treat in these thoughtful and able volumes. We do not suppose that they will command any extensive popularity; for except the rather select audience to which they are addressed, the rest of the world will probably only use them as a magazine of polemical weapons. Though much of their matter is extremely offensive to Catholics, yet beneath the surface there is an undercurrent of thought that is by no means inconsistent with our religion; and if Mr. Browning is a man of will and action, and not a mere dreamer and talker, we should never feel surprise at his conversion.

Short Notices.

THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, &c.

The Chain of Fathers Witnesses for the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. By F. C. Husenbeth, D.D. (Richardson.) Dr. Husenbeth's pamphlet is as opportune as it is interesting. It is a complete reply to the popular newspaper assertion, that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was not merely unknown to the Fathers, but actually contradicted by them all. The memory of Protestantism is as conveniently forgetful as its scholarship is conveniently inaccurate when

the doctrines of Catholicism are in question. Of the latter, witness the Anglican translation of the angelical salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured;" which we translate, "Hail, full of grace." Even our version is deficient: *κεχαριτωμένη* meaning, as Dr. Husenbeth reminds his readers, not merely "full of grace," but "formed in grace." A correspondent in another page reminds us that it was on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception that Father Petcherine escaped the malice of the enemies of Mary in Ireland, who charged him with maliciously turning that Bible in which the above specimen of accurate translation occurs.

The Seasons of the Church, what they teach. A Series of Sermons on the different times and occasions of the Christian year. Edited by the Rev. H. Newland. (J. and C. Mozley.) We have seen the "parson fly-fishing," both in Ireland and Norway; and here we have him preaching. We are bound to say that his sermons are as much better than the ordinary run of Protestant sermons as his sporting-books are more amusing than most of the travelling lucubrations of his clerical brethren. We heartily wish that all Anglican congregations were accustomed to hear nothing worse than Mr. Newland appears to give his people. But what can a person of his sense mean by such a fantastical piece of affectation as the following?

"It is very evident that the Church must have had some such intention"—(*i. e.* of illustrating Christian doctrine by the offices of the various seasons)—"in the plan of its Sundays and holidays, from the fact, that throughout the whole of the Western Church there is the same general arrangement of collects, epistles, and gospels—that week after week the Church of Rome, the Church of England and her offsets, and even the Churches of Scandinavia, imperfect as they are, set forth the very same passages of Scripture, and deduce from them the very same prayers."

Really, from a man like Mr. Newland, this is too ridiculous. The fact that those miserable reformers in England and Sweden stole certain passages of the Bible from the "Church of Rome," and printed them as they found them, is a proof of the "intention" of *the* Christian Church! Mr. Newland knows as well as we do, that Luther, Calvin, Latimer, and Ridley cared no more for the "Christian year" than we care for Calvin's commentaries on the Bible.

By the way, in the sermon on "The Presence of Christ by his Scriptures," there is very little difference between the views set forth and the Catholic doctrine of development. We are glad to see that Mr. Newland is a doctrinal and not a candlestick species of Puseyite. The latter are among the most unmitigated humbugs of the day.

The Conversion of M. Marie-Alphonse Ratisbonne: the original Narrative of Baron de Bussièrès. Edited by Rev. W. Lockhart. (Burns and Lambert.) Most people know that the conversion of M. Ratisbonne is one of the most remarkable things of the kind in modern times. M. de Bussièrès' account is most interesting, and not less so is Ratisbonne's letter to the Abbé Desgenettes, appended to the present translation. We are glad to see it offered to the English reader in so agreeable a shape as F. Lockhart's edition.

Catechetical Questions. By the Rev. T. A. Walker. (Buller, Preston.) Three hundred and five questions to remind catechisers and teachers what to ask children. A useful little *digital*, if we may coin a new word; for it does not pretend to the dignity of a *manual*.

The Devout Child of Mary: being Novenas and Prayers for the Festivals of the Blessed Virgin. (Baltimore, Murphy; London, Dolman.) The title of this prettily bound little volume describes its contents. It has the approbation of the Archbishop of Baltimore. A large number of the best-known English hymns in honour of Mary are interspersed throughout the various devotions.

Bode's Bampton Lectures for 1855. "*The Absence of Precision in the Formularies of the Church of England scriptural and suitable to a state of probation.*" We have not seen this book; but we cannot forbear quoting its title, as an illustration of the development of Protestant doctrine. It is the old story; but it has not been professed so openly till within these few years. The Englishman does not like cut-and-dried arguments. The demonstrative proof is too strong to be convincing; he likes to depend on probabilities, on analogies, on guess, on processes which leave the reason at liberty to halt and waver between two opinions, rather than on proofs which compel the understanding to assent. "I do not want certainty," he says; "I accept of my state of doubt: it is so natural, it is so like what we have to be contented with in other matters, that it must be intended to hold good in religion also. All our probation lies in the uncertainty of things. Faith is not possible when the invisible becomes visible; possession excludes hope; charity is not tried where there are no apparent reasons for hatred and dislike. Make all things clear, definite, certain, and you take them out of the region of action and of life. No, I like inquiry, so I do not wish for infallibility; I like doubt, so I do not ask for certainty; I like liberty, so I respectfully decline to put a collar round my neck, and to deliver the chain to you to hold."

Yes, we may add, and you perhaps like sin, and so you do not ask for virtue; you like license, so you oppose yourself to all government; you like disorder, so you would disturb all order. But the question is, not what you like, but what has been provided for you. It is of no use to appeal to the analogy of nature, when the question is about grace. It is foolish to conclude that because by nature we are in a state of uncertainty, therefore revelation must leave us in the same state. This is to deny revelation altogether. Because by nature the soul is in miserable and desperate uncertainty, because it yearns to know something of its origin, its home, and its destiny, and has no means of satisfying its wants, therefore God, when He condescends to answer these questions, to satisfy these yearnings, to reveal these secrets, must give an answer that is no answer, must give a stone for bread, must give such a revelation as will leave us as uncertain as we were without it. Want of precision indeed! It is want of revelation, want of truth, want of the desire of truth,—a determination to keep your tithes and your position at all hazards, that can make you accept such an argument as this. You ask for a proof of the Church; and when Father Mumford, or Cardinal Wiseman, or Dr. Newman, or Dr. Möhler, gives you a proof that is, considering its subject-matter, as logical and irrefragable as Euclid himself, you refuse to accept it because it is too clear. It is like a peevish child refusing the present for which but now it was screaming. Or it is like the men who had lost their swine begging the great Revealer and Miracle-worker to depart from their coasts, doubtless for fear of losing more swine. You ask to know; and when you are told, you quarrel with the teller because he answered you but too well.

Popular Astronomy. By François Arago. Translated by Admiral Smyth and R. Grant. 2 vols. Most astronomers would probably think

their science founded on mathematics ; Arago thinks it founded on common sense, and asserts that analytical formulæ do not enable us to dispense with the elementary ideas which are as plain to any cultivated mind as to the professed mathematician, and perhaps plainer, as he shows by an anecdote in illustration, to the effect that a German geometer, author of several esteemed works on optics, had so absorbed himself in the complicated formulæ at which he had arrived, and had so utterly forgotten the practical application of them, that one day, at a congress of astronomers, when he wished to examine a star, he turned the eye-piece of the telescope towards the object, and applied his eye to the object-glass.

Let it not, however, be supposed that even an Arago can make astronomy an easy science. All we say is this, that the gentleman of leisure and cultivation, who chooses to give up his mind to the study, can in a few weeks, by means of these bulky volumes, arrive at such a knowledge of astronomy as by the system of other writers would have to be preceded by some years' discipline in mathematics. Not that Arago falls into the error of Goethe, who supposed that a man might discover the laws of optics without any mathematical knowledge ; but he proves that an able mathematician may so reconstruct his analytical methods as to make them intelligible to common sense without the aid of any thing but the mere elements of geometry and arithmetic.

MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURE.

History of the Reign of Philip II., King of Spain. By Wm. H. Prescott. Two volumes. It is really a pleasure to read Mr. Prescott's histories. As Catholics, we can sincerely say that we do not desire the historian to be a party man. Though we hate the mendacious bigotry of your Humes, your Robertsons, and your D'Aubignés, we have no desire to see the same facts cooked up to serve Catholic party purposes. It is a great mistake to suppose that the Catholic identifies the cause of his Church with that of Catholic monarchs, whose history, on the contrary, displays but too uniform a tissue of the jealousies and oppositions and struggles and oppressions which the Church had to suffer from their hands. But still, it must always be offensive to the Catholic to hear monarchs of his communion abused and misrepresented, simply because they are Catholics ; and to see their royal vices and shortcomings attributed to their religion, and not to their evil passions and weakness of will. Philip II. has been one of the Catholic bogies with whose name Protestant nurses have frightened naughty little boys and girls. Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Harris have found him an excellent scarecrow to frighten Protestant pigeons from the corn-field of the Church. We do not say that Mr. Prescott's narrative makes Philip an ornament of his religion ; but it reduces him to reasonable proportions, it divests him of horns and tail, and makes him an intelligible man, actuated by intelligible principles, and yielding at times to intelligible temptations and weaknesses. He appears before us as a powerful monarch, acting for his own ends and purposes and in accordance with his own convictions, and not as an incarnate fiend and a tool of Jesuits.

Greece and the Greeks of the Present Day. By Edmond About. (Edinburgh, Constable.) M. About is the author of a very clever story, which made a great noise in the *salons* of Paris, but which un-

fortunately appears to have been "adapted" from a forgotten Italian novel of the last century. M. About may perhaps be a little unscrupulous; but the present book proves him to be a very clever fellow, an epigrammatic writer, a shrewd observer, and an able painter.

The Greeks are a race who thrive better abroad than at home. Like Jews or Armenians, while their own country is bankrupt and desert, abroad they rule in the exchanges and corn-markets of the world. Dishonest, conceited, cowardly, untruthful, they are a people with whom it is more pleasant to have no relations. As for their religion, with which Puseyites are so anxious to prove their communion, it is "a dead letter; it prescribes no virtues, but only grimaces; it prostrates the body to the earth without raising the soul to heaven; this religion, daughter of the lower empire, partakes of Byzantine imbecility." Yet every man in the kingdom observes it, and believes in it; and no one fears to appear ridiculous in fulfilling its duties. The Greek is sober, and generally exemplary in his family relations. The nation may be sick, but not incurably so. What is curious is its utter loss of all artistic power. No poet has appeared in modern Greece. Every body, without exception, sings out of tune and through the nose; they have neither the sense of colour nor the sense of form; they are neither painters, nor architects, nor statuaries. As we could only give a good idea of this agreeable and probably truthful book by copious extracts, we beg to refer our readers to the work itself, which is very well translated, and published at a reasonable price in Constable's *Miscellany of Foreign Literature*.

The Song of Hiawatha. By Longfellow. (London, Bogue.) As Bailey versifies the mythology of the Gnostics and kindred creeds, so does Longfellow in this poem treat that of the Red Indians. Hiawatha is a mythological person, the inventor of maze, canoes, fishing, hunting, and so on. Separate cantos relate to his different exploits. Two of them, his wooing of Minnehaha, the "laughing water," and the death of his wife, are beautiful and touching. The rest is in part obnoxious to our criticisms upon Mr. Bailey; but here the mythology is so simple and childish, that the whole has a much more poetical stamp than the verbose enigmas of "The Mystic." The poem is all written in one metre, which the following lines will exemplify. Hiawatha

"Saw the moon rise from the water,
Rippling, sounding from the water,—
Saw the flecks and shadows in it,
Whispered, 'What is that, Nokomis?'
And the good Nokomis answered,
'Once a warrior very angry
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight;
Right against the moon he threw her;
'Tis her body that you see there.'"

This is perhaps a fair average specimen of the contents of the poem: we do not know how far it is to be trusted as a faithful reproduction of the genuine traditions of the Indians.

Two Summer Cruises with the Baltic Fleet in 1854-5; being the Log of the Pet. By the Rev. R. T. Hughes. (London, Smith and Elder.) The "Pet" was present at the capture of Bomarsund and at the bombardment of Sweaborg; and Mr. Hughes narrates in a clear and truthful manner exactly what he saw. He is a pleasant lively writer, and jots down a good many amusing observations; he strikes us as rather free for a parson. The book abounds with quotable passages: we give one or two:

"A German vessel may be known by the beautiful national melodies which the crew sing in harmony; a Dutchman by the clatter of wooden shoes; a Frenchman by vociferous chatteration; and a ship that sails from our own dear native land may be recognised by our national curses and bad language in general." Russian vessels are known in a fog by the smell; "their boats and crews are the filthiest, frowsy, shaggy, ragged, shockheaded sea-vermin that ever stank upon the waves."

The following notes on Swedish churches add another testimony to several which have been quoted in the *Rambler* to the same effect:

"In Swedish churches one looks in vain for any trace of religious reverential feeling. . . . Royal pews, tombstones, and inscriptions in honour of the king, are made so much of, that they seem to say in the words of the Psalmist, 'He is thy Lord God, and worship thou him!' It is customary also, except during service, to wear hats in church; the doors, with a possibly needful, but certainly not seemly caution, are locked at the beginning of the sermon, and there you must sit *volens volens* to the end; and lastly, notice of skalds, or public hunting-appointments is always given in church. Imagine a clergyman in Northamptonshire rising and saying, 'I give notice that Lord Fitzwilliam's hounds will meet on Monday at Stanwick Pastures; on Wednesday at Bythorn Toll-bar; and on Friday at Croxton Park.'"

(We may observe parenthetically that we can imagine such a thing very well. We knew a church in old days where one of the lords of the manor used to cause notice to be given of court-leets and court-barons, where the tenants were invited to repair to do suit and service before a bailiff smoking his pipe in the back-parlour of a wayside public-house.) But to return to Mr. Hughes:

"A traveller in Sweden pines for one of those solemn beautiful little chapels which we find in foreign lands by the wayside, on the mountain-pass, by the cataract or the ford, where holy reverence and devotion are expressed in every simple feature of wood and stone. But such things may be sought for in vain in the Church of Luther; and I must admit, that those of our own chapels which I have seen in Sweden quite keep pace with the religious feeling of the land."

Several extracts concerning the war, and the loss of our naval prestige by our extreme anxiety to keep our ships out of range in the Baltic, might be made; but we can recommend the whole volume as amusing, and, in comparison with the general run of books, even solid. Mr. Hughes is evidently a practised writer. He is the author of one of the best of the "Cambridge Essays."

A Treatise on Algebra. By B. Sestini, S.J., Professor in Georgetown College. (Baltimore, Murphy; London, Dolman.) Another effort of the Jesuits to enslave the human race. No doubt, as we learn that the education of the Austrian people is now to be "handed over to the Jesuits," this volume will be employed for the demoralising and degrading the souls of young Germany. Wonderful to relate, however, we have not discovered that F. Sestini has any where contrived to insinuate Popery by means of x , y , and z ; but perhaps that is because the present volume does not treat on what mathematicians call "impossible quantities." Not even a Jesuit, it is clear, can teach Popery by means of algebra; though we have seen it assailed in a Protestant book on arithmetic. Seriously speaking, F. Sestini's book is extremely well done, though possibly a little more technical in its occasional phrases than is absolutely necessary. Somehow or other, it gives us the idea that its author has a most intense relish for his subject; he seems to *feel* the force of a formula with the sort of keenness of gusto with which a

musician hears a symphony of Beethoven's, or an artist studies the miraculous aerial perspectives of Turner. The volume is also well turned out, in the way of printing, paper, and binding.

Brambletye House. By Horace Smith. (Parlour Library. Hodson.) Horace Smith's best novel, and a good one in itself. We have a very agreeable impression of its perusal when it first came out.

Agamemnon the King. From the Greek of Æschylus. By W. Blew, M.A. (Longmans.) That Mr. Blew possesses one requisite for the translation of Æschylus—a capacity for writing animated and sonorous verses—his own "Prologue" to the present version abundantly shows. Such a rendering of the Greek into English as will convey to the unlearned reader an adequate conception of the extraordinary Michel-Angelesque grandeur of the original, is, we need hardly say, all but impossible. Æschylus is one of the most untranslatable of poets. He sung as Michel-Angelo painted; and who could produce the superhuman effect of the frescoes on the Sistine roof by any description or any device of copying? Mr. Blew's translation, if not impossibly Æschylean, is at any rate a very creditable and interesting effort. Half the volume consists of notes and illustrations, mostly in the way of parallel passages from other poets, for which, like many readers, Mr. Blew has quite a passion. The book is altogether the work of a scholar and an intelligent admirer of the great tragedian.

The Last of the Arctic Voyages; a Narrative of the Expedition in H.M.S. Assistance, under the command of Capt. Sir E. Belcher, in search of Sir John Franklin, during the years 1852-3-4, with Notes of Natural History, &c. 2 vols. (London, Lovell Reeve.) The last of the Arctic voyages does not add much to our knowledge of the northern regions, except a few discoveries in natural history, and tabular views of temperature, rise of tides, and growth of mustard-and-cress. The writer is evidently under the greatest anxiety to prove himself in the right in his disputes with his officers, into the particulars of which we suppose he is precluded from entering in a book "published under the authority of the Lords of the Admiralty." The consequence is, that the narrative is disfigured by a querulous tone, and an undercurrent of general inuendos and charges against almost every body under his command, and by a selection of orders and other documents which have no value except as enabling him to make out his case. Neither the style nor the matter of these two large volumes seems to us to be satisfactory. However, we must except from this censure the notes on natural history in the appendix.

The Ballads of Ireland. Collected and edited by Edward Hayes. 2 vols. (London, A. Fullarton and Co.) As a whole these ballads are disappointing; many of them are not the true national songs of Ireland, with their racy humour and their quaint expression, but a set of dandy drawing-room imitations, in few of which do we recognise the true Irish spirit. Perhaps the political ballads come nearest to the vulgar ideal, with all their naive exaggeration and brag, which have been so well parodied by Thackeray. Several of the rest are lovely songs, tender, pathetic, or fanciful; but only Irish inasmuch as they were written (generally) by Irishmen.

Western Wanderings, or a Pleasure Tour in Canada. By W. H. G. Kingston. 2 vols. (London, Chapman and Hall.) Mr. Kingston is the author of six other works, besides two et-ceteras; yet he does not seem a very judgmatical writer. For instance, he thinks the points of

his speech after the last day's dinner on the voyage out worth preserving; they are, 1. a hope that the stars and stripes may ever float peacefully by the union-jack; and 2. that he felt towards Americans as towards brothers. Half an hour after, land was in sight. He gazed on it with intense eagerness. "It was America, with its interesting past, its magnificent present, its glorious future." We wonder whether the past, present, and future of America looked like the twenty centuries that were caught spying the French army from the top of the pyramids. We certainly do not wonder at the eager gaze, considering the rarity of the spectacle. At p. 188, vol. i. we have a notice of the sentimental girl that married one of the men exhibited as a red chieftain in Catlin's exhibition in London. She went out with a piano and a variety of elegant furniture; she was a fine, handsome, intelligent person. She sang and played well; indeed, her great delight was music, and it was her sad and only solace when she reached, not the rustic palace of the great red chief, but the miserable shanty of the rough half-caste carpenter, her husband, to instruct the young squaws in such music as they were capable of learning. She had died two years before Mr. Kingston's visit to the Sault Ste. Marie. Such was the end of novel-reading.

In another place we are told that "every inch of the ground" (of a new settlement) was rough with logs, fallen trunks, great and small branches, chips, stones, planks, and other sawn timber." This reminds us of a proclamation of the Mayor of Weymouth, on occasion of a visit from George III., inviting the townsmen to remove all stones, cabbage-stalks, wheelbarrows, and other vegetables out of the streets.

In justice to Mr. Kingston, we must own that these slips are not fair average specimens of his book, which is tolerably amusing, though somewhat spoony (or, as he calls it, rose-coloured); but this he excuses on the ground of the present tour having been his wedding trip—*valeat quantum*.

The Life of Henry Fielding: with Notices of his Writings, his Times, and his Contemporaries. By F. Lawrence. (London, Hall and Virtue.) This is a biography of the great novelist who wrote *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*, written in the same manner as Mr. Forster's successful *Life of Goldsmith*, and presenting the subject of the memoir in relation to his times and contemporaries, so that his works and character may be estimated by the standard of his age. Mr. Lawrence is a very fair critic and historian, and writes with the intelligence of an enthusiastic admirer; though he has none of that kindred genius which enables Mr. Thackeray to present so vivid a picture of his predecessor in his volume on the English humorists.

Cambridge Essays. Contributed by Members of the University. (London, J. W. Parker.) This, like the corresponding volume of the Oxford Essays, which we noticed in a former number, is intended to be an annual contribution to our periodical literature. The subjects on the whole are such as have present interest, and they are handled in a more practical and experienced manner than those in the Oxford volume. The first essay, on the Life and Genius of Molière, gives a very complete picture of the French dramatist and his works; but is also somewhat pedantic. The second, on the English Language in America, is singularly meagre. Galton's Notes on Modern Geography, though amusingly wanting in precision in definitions, is practical and business-like. The next essay is not so good; but the rest of them are longer, more complete, and more carefully executed. The essays on the Relation of Novels to Life, and on the Future Prospects of the British Navy,

are able and interesting; as also, the last, on Classical Education, a subject that was well treated in the Oxford Essays. Altogether it is an able volume.

Eastern Experiences; collected during a Winter's Tour in Egypt and the Holy Land. By Adam Steinmetz Kennard. (London, Longmans.) There are so many writers who have a profound knowledge of the antiquities and inhabitants of Egypt and Palestine, that the casual tourist cannot expect that his observations should be treated as new pieces of information, or should be valued by any other standard than their liveliness and capability of amusing. Mr. Kennard's experiences may be recommended on these grounds, as well as for the absence of that flip-pant and infidel tone which generally characterises the narratives of Protestant visitors to the Holy Places. On the contrary, he seems to have gone to Palestine with somewhat of the spirit of a pilgrim; though he owns that his devotion was marred by the crowding and squeezing and hustling which he underwent at the hands of his brother palmers.

Mexico and its Religion; with Incidents of Travel in that Country. By R. A. Wilson. (London and New York, Sampson Low, and Harper.) This is a know-nothing book, containing the most abominable accusations against the monks and nuns of Mexico, which Mr. Wilson pretends to have copied from a work which he thus describes:

"I learn from the preface of a book in the Spanish language, which I purchased at Mexico, entitled *The Voyages of Thomas Page*, that a Dominican monk of that name, the brother of the royalist governor of Oxford under Charles I., was smuggled into Mexico by his Dominican brethren, against the king's order, which prohibited the entry of Englishmen into that country. As a missionary monk he resided in Mexico, or New Spain, eighteen years. On his return to England, he published an account of the country which he visited, under the title of a *Survey of the West Indies*. This being the first and last book ever written by a resident of New Spain that had not been submitted to the most rigid censorship by the Inquisition, it produced so profound a sensation, that it was translated into French by an Irish Catholic named O'Neil, at the command of the great Colbert. From this expurgated French edition the Spanish copy now before me was translated . . . I have since found a *black letter* (!) copy of the original, printed in London, 1677; but I have concluded to use the translations (from the Spanish) as furnishing a more official character to the picture therein drawn of the grossly immoral state of the clergy and of the religious orders."

The first would-be translation from this Dominican book is a picture of the cell of the "Prior of Vera Cruz," which we are informed was richly tapestried and adorned with feathers of birds of Michoacan; walls were hung with pictures of merit; tables covered with rich rugs of silk; sideboards heaped with China porcelain; vases and bowls standing about, containing preserved fruits and most delicate sweetmeats, &c. &c., certainly "most foreign to the poverty of a *begging friar*."

After this our readers will of course not be surprised to hear that the catalogues of the library of the British Museum, which certainly cannot be deficient in any English book which ever "created a prodigious sensation," or was "translated by order of Colbert," make no mention whatever of this "Thomas Page," nor of his *Survey of the West Indies*, nor of any O'Neil who translated it; nor, in short, do they give the slightest cue to the discovery of any such work as Mr. Wilson pretends to have found with such facility. Of course, the whole thing is a malicious hoax; and we will not trust ourselves to characterise either the

unprincipled blackguardism of the author, or the blind bigotry of the publishers, who probably made no sort of inquiries concerning the character of the book they were about to launch upon the waters. Sufficient for them that it was against Popery. Such an end, of course, sanctifies any means.

FOREIGN LITERATURE.

De l'Art Chrétien. Par A. F. Rio. Tom. 2. (Paris, Ambroise Bray.) This second volume of M. Rio's popular work embraces the Lombard schools of architecture, sculpture, and painting; namely, those of Milan, Bergamo, and Lodi, together with those of Cremona and Ferrara. In chapter xvi. the author gives a short sketch of a theoretical work on architecture by Averulino, better known as Antonio Philaretus, the Florentine architect of the magnificent Ospedale Maggiore at Milan: the book still remains in Ms.; but we hope that M. Rio's notice of it will lead to its early publication.

The Efforts of Protestantism in Europe, and the Means which it employs to pervert Catholics. By Mgr. Rendu, Bishop of Annecy. (Paris, Louis Vivès.) This little book may be divided into three parts: an account of the machinery by which the Bible-societies and Protestant associations attempt to sow doubt and disunion among Christian communities; a series of conversations, in which their pretensions are controverted; and an exposition of Catholic doctrine, with especial reference to the points assailed by Protestants. The book is a manual intended for the use of the author's flock.

Descriptive and Historical Notice of the Parochial Church of St. Eustache, at Paris. (Paris, Dentu.) St. Eustache is the grand expiring effort of Gothic art in France; for the cathedral of Orleans, though later, is but an insipid imitation or tasteless restoration of the ruined church. But in St. Eustache quite new principles are for the first time acted upon,—principles which might be made as fruitful as those which gave birth to the other well-known and well-defined styles of Gothic architecture. We do not say that these principles are analysed or even hinted at in the work before us; but any work is worth mentioning which is calculated to call the attention of men with eyes in their heads to perhaps the most magnificent and imposing of the churches of Paris. The profits of this book go to the poor of the parish.

Life of the Reverend Mother Emily, Foundress and first General Superior of the Religious of the Holy Family of Villefranche de Rouergue, Diocese of Rodez. By Léon Aubineau. (Paris, Louis Vivès.) This is an order comprising two kinds of sisters: the enclosed, who educate children; and the *tourières*, who are employed in the ministrations of charity outside the convent. The narrative is an example of the true endogenous growth of the productions of grace. In England, with human calculation, we define what we are to do, we provide money and means for the external instruments; and we think that the living spirit must come when it is called. In France the living spirit is first allowed to develop itself, and to gather round it and assimilate the circumstances and instruments which are required for its external manifestation. It is as difficult to build up a religious institute as to build a living tree; the one grows by the secret operations of grace, as the other by the mysterious forces of nature. Neither will suffer the control of human calculation and prevision.